

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

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Summary: The Covenant have set their sights on Harmony, humanity's last food growing planet. our only hope is these gifted Spartans, who will be known, by few, as the saviors of us all. They are Zeta. Full of battles, suspense, and nemesis'.

1. Prologue 1

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

****Authors Note:** Hello everyone. This is my first fanfic, so it would be appreciated if I could get some reviews as feedback to know if this story is any good. It was originally an idea for a machinima, but I thought i should write it as a story. The good part about writing it for this sight is that I'm not bound by the limits of Halo Reach, and I can do whatever I want. I will start by uploading the prologue of my story, which is told in three parts, each part about a different Spartan (except for part two, which will have two of them). I will post each part once a week. when all of the prologue is up, depending on what the feedback is, I will or will not continue it. Okay, I think Ive bored you long enough. one thing before you get started, each of the four characters is based on myself and three of my friends, so as a little activity, when all of the prologue is up, see if you can guess which character represents me. Well, enjoy.
;)**

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Prologue Part 1

It was just another day in training. Chazz-013 ran through the streets of the simulated city. Spotting a good cover position, while running full force, he made a forward leap, tucked into a ball and rolled right into cover. Pulling the DMR off his back he scanned the

surrounding buildings...

"There." Three elites. Two looking out adjacent windows on the building across the street, and one on the roof. Chazz took a breath, and aimed.

>Pop, Pop, Pop. Three shots in two seconds. The bullets each hit their respective elite in the head. The elites jerked back and fizzled out of existence.
"_No matter how many times I see these holograms, they still give me the creeps_" thought Chazz as he reloaded his rifle.

Suddenly the sensors on his torso pinged and declared him dead. He looked down to see an energy wrist blade through his abdomen.

>"Dammit!" Chazz yelled. He turned around to see the hologram of a spec ops elite had got right behind him.
"how did that get behind me?" said Chazz to himself. With a pang he remembered that he was running this simulation without his motion tracker working. '_The Sarge is gonna have my ass for this one._' he thought Slowly the training room began to power down, and Chazz saw the sergeant approaching him.

Chazz sighed while thinking "And here we..."

>"DAMMIT PRIVATE!" yelled the sergeant.
"...go." Chazz finished.

>"How many times do I gotta tell you, always look behind you. had that been a real battle you'd have been dead. Done. No respawns like in your skirmishes with the others."
"Sorry Sarge." came Chazz's reply. "I forgot my motion tracker was disabled."

After 5 minutes of the Sarge yelling at him about reliance on equipment, he was finally dismissed. After changing out of his standard training suit and into workout fatigues he headed for the weight room to blow off some steam. Sometimes it was hard being the best.

He was the top candidate for this planets Spartan III program. Strongest, fastest and most precise. He could hack anything with the speed and grace of a hacker-class 'dumb' AI. The one thing that he wasn't good at was something Sarge calls the sixth sense. Normally he would rely on his motion tracker to check his six, but he had been training with it off. As far as he knew, he was the only one doing these solo training programs, and it seemed like everyone expected him to get it right every time. He knew that he should be to be a good soldier, but sometimes he just wished...

His train of thought was interrupted by someone entering the weight room. It was the Sargent.

>"Ahh, so you're in here." he said "Come over here, I feel like I should show you something." Curious, Chazz got up from the weight bench and walked over to the Sargent.
"What is it sir?"he asked

>"Well how should I start this..." Sarge began pacing, something he never does.
"Look son, I know that at some times it may seem like I'm always on your case about being aware of surroundings, but I personally cannot stress it enough." Chazz was puzzled. The Sage never talked to him like this before.

>"You ever wondered why I'm not out there fighting instead of training you lot?" he asked Chazz nodded.
"The thought had crossed my mind once or twice sir." the sergeant was still a great specimen

of a soldier. Excellent build, still in his early thirties. The Sarge sighed like a man full of fatigue and pulled up the back of his shirt.

Chazz couldn't help but let out a small gasp. Down the Sarge's back from his right hip to his left shoulder was a huge scar. The tissue had been cleaved and seared from an energy sword swipe. It was amazing that this man could still fire a rifle at target practice without his shoulder popping out.

>"S-Sarge? How- When did you..? Chazz stammered.
"Back when I was out in battle one time I fell for the same mistake you did in that training session. I was trusting on my motion tracker, but those elites have upgraded their active camo to emit a radar jamming field around them. Damn thing nearly cut me in half, but something told me to jump forward so the bastard only got my back. But still the wound was enough to knock me over and render my arm unusable for the time."

Sarge looked at Chazz with a look of understanding. "Look, back then I was a lot like you are now, a good soldier but I just didn't have my survival instinct down." Chazz was taken aback by this story. There was one thing that was bugging him though.

>"Then how did you kill that elite with only one arm?" The sergeant gave a small chuckle.
"I didn't. An ally sniper, who was actually a friend of mine, saw it and killed it before it could finish me. Afterwards he got me back to safety. I owe him my life. Now I can't help him because I've been declared unfit fit duty, and I train the next generation. I'm not even sure if he's alive." the Sarge paused, recalling his friend. "Now I hope you can understand just how important it is to be aware of your surroundings, and always look behind you." Chazz gave the sergeant a crisp salut.
>"Sir yes sir."<p>

At that moment the commander of the Spartan training base, Commander Locksley, walked into the room, looking like he meant business. Both Chazz and the sergeant snapped to attention.

>"OFFICER ON DECK!" shouted Sarge.
"At ease gentlemen." said Locksley. He walked right in front of the two of them and began his debriefing.

>"We have just received word that Reach is gone, and the Covenant has found the location of Harmony." Chazz's eyes went wide. Even the Sarge stiffened. Harmony was the last agricultural planet that humanity had.
"We have learned that Reach was attacked and defeated by the covenant. The best defense they had was Noble Team, but as it turns out that wasn't enough. ONI has requested that the the three remaining planets with Spartan training facility's send their best soldiers to create a four man team to be called Zeta Squad to assist in the defense of Harmony."

Locksley looked straight at Chazz.

>"It was decided hands down that you are the best we have, 013. You have been promoted to lieutenant and have been given new orders. You are to go to the armory where you will be equipped with a fully battle ready suit and weapons, then, board the pelican in hangar 4. Are we clear?" Chazz was aghast. How could Reach, humanities crown jewel, fall to those sons of bitches. Well he wasn't about to let them get away with it. He straitened to his full height.
"Sir yes sir!"

>" Very well." the commander replied. "Dismissed!"<p>

With that Chazz hurried off to the armory. With the help of the armorer, Chazz picked out a set of armor that suited him. The suit was purple with yellow trim on the forearms, belt and lower legs. The chest was from the UA/Base security model, armored in the front with grenades tucked under it, and slots for grenade launcher ammo circled the front of his belt. To give maximum protection to his right shoulder and yet still retain flexibility, he chose the classic ODS shoulder, modified for a Spartan III's armor. A CQC shoulder piece was mounted on his left shoulder for defensive play. he attached a UA/Chobham composite armor to his left thigh, and fastened on his left was a TacPad. his knees were protected by Gungnir guards, again for maneuverability. the last thing was his helmet. Chazz thought about this piece of gear for a bit before finally selecting a Hazop-style helmet with a silver visor and the CNM/I uplinks. . As he finished putting the armor on, he went over to the weapons rack and selected a DMR and a grenade launcher. The last thing he selected was an armor ability. He'd used them before once or twice. He decided on a rejuvenating deployable energy shield dome.

Feeling ready for anything, he finally headed to hangar 4. There he found two things. One was the pelican on the helipad painted to look like a shark, staring menacingly at him. The other was his sergeant standing on the helipad beside it. Chazz walked up to him and snapped him a quick salut.

>"It's been a honor to be trained by you sir" he said
"It's been my honor to train you." said the Sarge, returning the salute. Then he outstretched his hand. Chazz took in gratefully and shook it. Then after a nod to each other, Chazz climbed into the back of the pelican.

"All set back there?" asked the pilot over the comms.
>Chazz blinked his green status light in acknowledgment.
"Alrighty then." She said "I'm Jenny. I'll be the pilot for Zeta squad."
>"Hi Jenny, I'm Chazz. Like the look of the pelican." Jenny grinned and began to take off. Chazz sat back against the chair and removed his helmet. Looking down at his collarbone, he gazed at the emblem on his armor. Locksley had said that of the three planets that still had Spartans being trained, command was taking the best of them and making a four man team, meaning there would be two Spartans from one base, him, and then one other from the last planet. Chazz sat there for a while and wondered who they could be and if they would make a good team.<p>

****And that's the end of the first part of the prologue. The next part will go up next week. Thank you for reading and, if you feel so inclined, please review. feedback would be very appreciated.****

2. Prologue 2

The Untold Story Of Zeta Squad

****Authors Note:** Hello again. I'm back for another installment of Zeta squads beginning. For those of you who read the first chapter, welcome back. For those of you just joining us, welcome, and I would highly recommend you read the first part of the prologue in order to learn about Chazz. When I finished writing part one, I realized that the first chapter seemed really serious. Now bare in mind, this is a story with depth, but i do want to get my readers to crack a smile every now and then. This chapter is about two other members of Zeta,

and will have a bit more humor to it. Well, read on, if it pleases you, and remember that feedback is greatly appreciated.

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Prologue part 2

Kyle-040 hid behind a dumpster, clutching his sniper rifle, and waited. Four elites walked passed his hiding place._>'A patrol group' he thought. He peeked over the top of the dumpster and set his sniper rifle against it. Elites were so proper and organized, sometimes to organized for their own good. hey were marching in two columns, side by side. Kyle figured he could take two with one round and the other two with a second. Kyle took aim, and fired. The round passed right through the two intended elite's heads and the fizzled away, but didn't stop. The bullet hit the side of a building and rebounded into a third elites head. The last one jumped back and looked around for the assailant.>'Oops.' thought Kyle. The last elite had his back to him, so he leaped over the side of the dumpster, ran up to the elite, jumping on its back, and stabbed it in the neck. Once all was clear and he heard no signs of pursuit, he ran into an office building.

Five minutes later, he crouched on the roof of the building, a dead elite sniper fading away behind him, gazing down the sight of his sniper rifle. He an his partner were attempting the VIP simulation, which no one had accomplished.

Down below on the street was a legion of elite honor guards, their energy spears raised high like a forest of spikes. In the middle of the elites was his target, a prophet. The mission was to capture the prophet and make sure none of the elites triggered an alarm.

Kyle had already done better than most of the recruits. In this scenario, recruits started with a knife and had to figure out the rest for themselves. Most get caught trying to set up a position or get weapons. But Kyle had attained a sniper rifle and found the perfect vantage point. He lost track of his partner early on but he felt confident. But in the time it took for him to reach the roof, the honor guard had secured a perimeter around the prophet.

"_Ohh hell no_." ran through Kyle's mind. "_I did not get this far to back out now_." he proceeded to ping his partner on the comms.

>"Sam, I found the target and have set up position on a roof with a sniper rifle. The problem is that there's a legion of honor guards surrounding him. Gonna have to wait till theres a break in their ranks."<p>

... No reply. Kyle tried again.

>"Sam?"
"Yeah I see them." came Sam's reply. There was an odd hint of laughter in his voice. "you got a good view?" Kyle blinked his green light and sighed. Sam only acted like this when he had some crazy scheme.

>"What are you up to this time?"He posed the obvious question.
There was a chuckle on the comms.

>"How bout we split the job?" Sam proposed. Kyle raised an eyebrow under his helmet
"What did you have in mind?"

>"You can secure the prophet, and I'll deal with his escort. Kyle was taken aback by this idea. There were about 25 elites down there.
"How the hell are you gonna manage that? Did you find a rocket launcher or something?" Another chuckle.
>"Nope. The rockets in this scenario is just an urban legend, otherwise this mission wouldn't be so impossible."
"Then what weapons have you got?" asked Kyle, beginning to grow impatient.

>"Well there's my knife," Sam began. Kyle groaned. "and as far as weapons go, I found a pistol and a grenade. The interesting part was I ran into a patrol group, so I only have one bullet left." Kyle shook his head. Just a knife, a pistol with only a single round, and a grenade.
"Sam that crazy, even for you." He said, but he knew there was no stopping him.
>"Wanna bet? Let's say if I can, you owe me your lunch." Sam was so full of himself.
"Sam, I don't know if you remember, but we have to pull this off without them setting an alarm off." said Kyle, trying to speak a little sense even though he knew Sam wouldn't listen.
>"Well they can't pull an alarm if there all dead."<p>

And that was the last word spoken. Next thing Kyle heard was the revving of an engine. The enemy troops came to a stop. All of a sudden, Sam, howling with laughter, came out of nowhere on a mongoose and sped right for the line of elites.

Sam was having the time of his life. As he was speeding toward the line of spears, now pointed at him, he cocked his pistol and wedged his grenade in the Mongoose's accelerator. Just before the mongoose made contact with the guard, he leaped off. The ATV crashed into the line of elites, killing five from the impact. Sam hit the ground, rolled, came up in a crouching position, took aim and fired his pistol.

The lone bullet hit the grenade, causing it to go off and and ignite the mongoose's gas tank. The ATV exploded, engulfing seven more elites in fire and they fizzled away. In ten seconds, Sam took out half the guard.

One elite managed to grab the prophet and jump out of the way. He ducked into an alleyway, attempting to get the holy one to safety, when a loud CRACK sounded in the air. A sniper round tore through the elites head, and winked out of existence. Kyle kept his rifle trained on the prophet. It tried to get up, but his floating chair was back where Sam was, and prophets were very frail creatures. What's more, Sam was just getting started.

Sam was out of ammo, so he ran straight at the closest elite and whipped the pistol straight at it's head. It struck it in the mouth, dazing it, and it dropped its spear. Sam tackled it and plunged his knife into its neck. As the elite disappeared, Sam looked up and saw eleven elites left. Ten were charging him, and one was running for backup.

>'Ahh, I'll let Kyle take that one' Picking up his knife and the dead elites discarded spear, he faced the other ten.
>"Alright ladies, let's dance!"

Kyle was truly impressed.

>"I have got to remember that nothing is impossible with him." he muttered to himself. Looking down through his scope, he noticed one

elite retreating. Glancing over at Sam, he saw his friend throw his knife and hit another elite in the eye. Kyle shrugged and shot the retreating elite. He returned his gaze to the prophet, who looked like he was talking to something. Kyle looked a little to the right of the prophet and saw that the air was shimmering.<p>

...

Sam jumped over the last elite and ran the spear over its neck. It fell with a thud and disappeared. With that, he brushed a hand over his shoulder, sheathed his knife and began to walk over to where the prophet lay.

>"Well Kyle, looks like you owe me a lunch." said Sam with a huge grin on his face. All of a sudden, a sniper round flew right over his shoulder. Sam jumped to the side in surprise.
"DUDE, WHAT THE HELL!" he yelled.

>"One thing about you, Sam, you never check your six." replied Kyle while trying not to laugh.
Sam spun around just in time to see the hologram of a spec-ops elite fizzle away. Kyle grinned.

>"How about we call it even?"<p>

Kyle tore off a power line connected to the building and used it to rappel down the side of the building. Kyle reached the prophet before Sam, so he picked it up and slung it over his shoulder. With that the mission was over, and the field slowly disappeared. Sam pulled his helmet off and grinned, his blond hair falling over his grey eyes.

>"Wow that was fun. We just beat the unbeatable mission." Kyle removed his own helmet and ran his hand through his black and orange hair, his green eyes glinting in the light.
"Yeah. Nice trick with the mongoose there."

>"Im thinking about calling that the 'battering ram'. Seems like it can be used in a wide variety of situations." Kyle grinned.
"You sir, are delightfully insane." he said.

>"And that will never change" replied Sam.
"You know, the Cap's gonna give you hell again for being reckless and stupid, right?" Kyle said. Sam grinned even more.

>"Tell me something I'm not aware of." The two both burst out laughing. They fist bumped each other and made their way to the mess hall.<p>

They never made it. While in the hallway, the CO of the base, Captain Stevens called out to them

>"040! 909!" Kyle and Sam stopped walking and snapped to attention. Kyle leaned over to Sam a bit.
"Your gonna get busted." he said with a smirk. Sam didn't reply, but stamped on Kyle's foot, causing Kyle to straighten up again.

Stevens never liked the two soldiers in front of him, especially Sam. They were careless, reckless, liabilities and several other words he could think of, all not very nice. So he hated having to say what he came to say.

>"Alright privates, here the deal. We've received word that Reach has fallen." He paused to let that sink in. It was the first time he ever saw these two look absolutely serious.
"What's more, we have discovered that the Covenant are now heading towards Harmony. ONI has tasked the three remaining planets with Spartan training facility's to make a four man team called Zeta squad out of each of their best. Now, it's pretty obvious that I don't like you two," he stared right at Sam when he said this."But you two are the finest soldiers I have

ever seen, so I'm sending you two." he saw the two glance at each other.

>"I personally volunteered to be the base that will send two Spartans, because I know you guys will die without the other watching his back. Both of you are hereby promoted to lieutenant. Your new orders are to proceed directly to the armory. There the armorer will get both of you new battle armor of your choice. After you've suited up and selected weapons, head to hangar alpha. A pelican will arrive to pick you up. DISMISSED!"<p>

The bases armory was divided into two parts: armor and weapons. The two Spartans first arrived at the armor half of the base. Kyle and Sam both went through the selections of armor. Both of them eventually selected their armors and went into different assembly rooms. Kyle eventually was set, wearing a slightly faded maroon set of armor that faded into his surroundings quite well. His torso was encased in a Tactical/Patrol body, complete with a small ghillie canopy over his shoulders and down his back. On his collarbone was the Zeta squad emblem, a flaming ninja head with a white buzz-saw design behind it. He had straps for extra sniper ammo on both shoulders, and a Tactical GPS fastened on his wrist. He chose FJ/Para style knee guards for better support when crouched. Thinking ahead of his friend being to reckless, he strapped a small med kit on his left thigh. He stared at his helmet for a moment. It was the Mjolnir MK V, with a black visor, modified to use on a Spartan III's armor. Satisfied, he slipped the helmet on and walked out of the assembly room.

He found Sam already there, with his own set of armor, very different from Kyle's. Where Kyle armor was custom faded to blend in with his surroundings, Sam's armor was a radiant gold. The armor screamed '**HERE I AM! COME GET ME!**'. His armor's main body was the HP/Parafoil variant, complete with a serrated knife strapped across his chest. The Zeta emblem was on his collarbone as well. His shoulder armor was enormous: security style on his right shoulder and commando on his left. His knees were protected by FJ/Para guards, like Kyle's, and had a large soft pouch on his thigh. What Kyle found curious about was his helmet. It was a recon helmet with an HUL attachment, which itself was odd for him, but the visor was what caught his eye. Instead of the standard issue choices of a dull greenish-yellow color, silver, blue, black or gold, his visor was a vibrant acrylic red, which gleamed in the light.

Sam saw Kyle staring.

>"What?" he asked.
"Two questions." Kyle replied

>"First off, what's with the recon helmet. If anything I would have that. It's not really your style."
Sam didn't care.

>"So. I picked it because the visor is shaped like a smile. So that the last thing those covie bastards see is me smiling at them." there was a hint of malice in his voice, making even Kyle, who had known him since they started training, shiver.
"Alright then, question two. Where did you get that visor color?"

>"Well I am friends with the armorer, so he hooked me up with this cool ass visor, makes me feel more awesome."<p>

Kyle sighed and they both turned to go to the weapon storage area. Sam was almost bouncing.

>"What are you so happy about?" asked Kyle. "We've been to the armory before."
"I know, but not to the back room." Sam replied gleefully. They finally reached the first room of weapons. It held

the Standard UNSC weaponry: assault rifles, DMRs, pistols, SMGs, different assortments of knives, and frag grenades. The back room, however was housing all the good stuff: rockets, sniper rifles, shotguns, grenade launchers, the works. What was really cool was the captured enemy weapons and experimental tech. Sam was like a Kid in a candy store. Kyle just shook his head and began choosing his gear.

Kyle selected a sniper rifle and slung it on his back. He then holstered a suppressed magnum on his right thigh. As he sat down to fill up on ammunition, he glanced over to see what Sam was doing.

>"Hello beautiful." Sam cooed, picking up a shotgun and twirling it around. Kyle couldn't help but give off a small smile, then proceeded to fill the slots on his shoulders with extra sniper rounds. After awhile, Sam finally calmed down and got to selecting his own gear. Naturally, he slung the shotgun on his back, then strapped an SMG to his thigh. He then proceeded to stock up on his own ammunition, sliding extra shotgun shells into slots on his forearms. The last thing they both did was select an armor ability. They had learned about them but never used them. Kyle took an experimental active cammo unit, and Sam went for armor lock. As they were walking towards the door, Sam suddenly stopped. He turned and looked at the rack of knives. Slowly, he picked up his prize: a massive kukuri knife. Eyes shining, he strapped the huge knife of his right security shoulder.<p>

While walking down the hall Sam asked Kyle,

>"You know, we never got to eat. Maybe we can-" just then their helmet comms buzzed. It was Captain Stevens.
"What the hell are you two doing? The pelican is waiting for you. Get to hangar alpha NOW!" The two Spartans blinked their green status lights and booked it for the hangar. Sam reached the doorway first, and fell over backwards, absolutely horrified.

>"HOLY JESUS CHRIST!" He screamed. Puzzled, Kyle peered around the door. A massive shark stared back at him. After about two seconds, he realized that it was a pelican painted to look like like a shark. Kyle looked back at Sam and burst out laughing hysterically. Sam got up and realized what had scared him.
"Man, screw you." he said. Kyle's laughter went on for two whole minutes before he finally calmed down.

>"I can't believe that you charge covenant battalions while laughing, but your scared of sharks."
"Dude, you just don't mess with sharks. They're terrifying." Kyle gave Sam a chuckle, Sam gave Kyle a glare, then they proceeded to board the pelican.

As they climbed into the back of the pelican, they saw another Spartan sitting there.

>"Hey," he said, sticking out his hand, "I'm Chazz-013."
"Sup," replied Sam, taking the hand and giving it a shake. "I'm Sam-909." Kyle then took Chazz's hand. "Kyle-040."

>"Welcome to Zeta squad boys." Came the pilots voice. "I'm Jenny and I'll be your pilot." With that, they took off. Sam stared up at the cockpit.
"What's up with paint job on this bird?" he asked toward Jenny. A silver pilot helmet turned to look back at him,

>"Why?" she asked, smirking "A big strong spartan scared of sharks."
"Yes." Sam replied simply. He was not gonna hide or argue his phobia with anyone. Jenny saw this and simply continued flying.

Chazz looked around at the two new Spartans. He could tell that they were both crazy, Sam a little more than Kyle, but were the perfect matches for each other. The way they moved and communicated was like the two shared a brain. The ultimate tag team. But this was gonna be a four man team.

>'Three Spartans down,' thought Chazz '_One to go.'_

** Well that should do it for now. I commend you for reading this far, and if your the kind of person that only reads the authors notes, to you I say... Why? before anyone tries to correct me, I shall lay some things down: first off, Kyle's utility on his thigh is not the Tactical/Trauma Kit, because that is a for the USER when the USER gets hit. the device that Kyle has on his leg is a cut down version of the big white medpacks in the game, chosen by him because he figures that he gonna have to patch Sam up on the field at some point. Second, I got the idea for Sam's red visor when it was rumored that 343 was gonna add new armory items to Halo Reach, one being a red visor_. _Part three will go up next week. thanks to all my readers for reading, my reviewers for reviewing, and for those who did both for...well,... both_. _;)**_
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3. Prologue 3

the Untold Story of Zeta Squad

Authors Note: Greetings to all explorers of mostly inaccurate and non profitable story writing. Well its that time of the week again. Time for another look at Zeta Squad. This shall conclude the prologue of the story, so by the end we shall all know who the four members of Zeta are. When I first started writing this chapter, it was gonna be my shortest one. now look at it.(CAUTION: Looking at it now as a whole may give spoilers to the chapter, and it is advised that the chapter is finished being read until you step back to look at it.) Well, enjoy. ;)

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Prologue part 3

"Come on Adam. Let's just call it off. We're gonna get into some real shit."

>Adam-130 turned to his friend Keith and continued twisting wires together without looking. This made Keith even more worried, considering that the device Adam was fiddling with was of the explosive type. Adam knew he could have just ignored Keith, but enjoyed his friends discomfort.<p>

"What are you so paranoid about?" He asked. He could have wired and armed this bomb blindfolded, in the dark, with frostbitten fingers. Adam had always been good at making things explode. He stopped what he was doing and continued his reasoning with Keith.

>"You know that I'm the best at what I do. Nothing goes 'boom' on my account unless I want it to."
"Really?" Keith returned. "I seem to recalled you being court-marshaled last week for blowing up the holo training room." Adam looked at Keith with a quizzical look in his eyes.

>"And your point is?" Keith looked wide eyed at Adam, who smiled at him at resumed his work on the bomb.<p>

Keith decided to bring up another point.

>"So why are we doing this again?" he asked. Adam rolled his eyes and explained the situation, again.
"What was the new idea that General Andrews thought of?"

>"Restricting all the recruits food consumption." Keith answered.
"Right. Now, how us that working out for us?" Adam continued. Keith gave a bit of a glare at the idea.

>"Awful. The recruits are starving. The worst part of it is the officers on the base don't need to participate. So Andrews gets to stuff his face and be amused by us."
"Top score. Partly reason why the holo room is in need of massive repair." Adam gave a small clap with his hand, "Now, what we're doing is sneaking into the kitchen and are gonna...borrow some food and bring it back to the barracks for everyone. The reason were going in through the wall is because the door has allot of security, plus it's only down the hall from Andrews' office, and to be honest, this way is allot more fun." Keith was still skeptical.

>"Are you taking into account that blowing up the wall will leave a giant hole in it? People will notice. Not to mention that the explosion will make a lot of noise." Adam chuckled thinking 'Oh there so innocent when they have no clue about the situation.'

>"Keith, this isn't an explosive. It's an alpha charge. When it goes off it makes a large pop at best, and it works by creating vibrations, destroying rigid objects at a molecular level. I've wired it to match the frequency of the wall, and to control how much wall gets destroyed. As for people discovering the hole, the charge is directly behind the kitchens massive refrigerator, so the hole won't be discovered for awhile." The small box on the wall beeped and Adam stepped back.
"Charge is set. You wanna do the honors?" Adam held out the detonator. Keith, now calmed down, took the detonator and held it in his hand.

>"Okay, on three. One...Two... Three!" The device ruptured with a pop, and a large man-sized section of the wall turned to dust. Silently the two made their way in.<p>

General Andrews sat in his office. It was late and he felt like turning in for the night. He still needed to sleep off the anger he felt towards a certain Adam-130. The general and the Spartan had been enemies since the first ordnance training session when the private had blown up the track field. Since then, 130 had been thrown in the brig several times, all due to destruction of the base. The only reason that he hadn't been discharged from the program was he was the best soldier on the planet. Andrews was still trying to discover how the recruit was getting all these explosives. The armorer swore up and down that he had no idea why all his inventory was disappearing, and was working on finding out. The new ration on food for recruits was Andrews plan to break 130's spirit. So the brat had brought real explosives into the training room. The private was depleting the UNSC's funds for this base at an alarming rate. It was the reason the General had a secret living quarters built off site of the base. It was that destination he was set for. He grabbed his coat of the rack and locked his office door behind him.

As he walked down the hall, he walked past the entrance to the kitchen. He decided to check the security systems to make sure that nothing suspicious had been going on. Heading to the terminal on the

wall, Andrews put in his administrator password and accessed the bases security. He reviewed the security cam footage of the hall outside of the door of the past 24 hours. Nothing out of the ordinary, and he found no loops. All sensors in the door found no unauthorized access. Satisfied, he powered the terminal down and turned to leave. At that moment, he heard a noise coming from behind the door to the kitchen. It was a large scraping noise. Then a muffled thud sounded, a voice swearing, more scraping, then silence. Andrews knew that something was up. Entering the code to the door, he stepped in and looked around. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary. He knew someone was in here, but who? Instantly a name came into the general's mind, but he had to find proof. As he walked past the cold storage machines, Andrews noticed that one of the refrigerators was askew. A breeze was coming from behind it. Andrews eyes widened. Slowly, he dragged the refrigerator out, and came face to face with a hole in the wall. Stepping out into the night, the general's eyes fell onto a small object in the grass. It was an alpha charge detonator. The only thing going through his head was a number. '130!'

Adam ran a hand through his short light brown hair and stretched leisurely out on his cot. He no longer found the brig very uncomfortable. His cell was like a second home to him.
>"So, what did you blow up this time, Adam?" asked the warden, Tom, who Adam had gotten to know in his frequent trips.
"Blew a hole in the kitchen wall in order to stop me and my fellow recruits from starving to death."
>"Ahh." said Tom, "And how did that go?"
"Pretty good." Came Adam's reply. Sure he got caught, but hey, he completed his objective. Keith got the food to everyone else and he didn't get caught. Adam yawned, causing a few tears well into his brown eyes and rolled over to have a nap.

Andrews paced around his office. This was the last straw. He had to do something or this kid will ruin him. The only solution was a protocol that hadn't been used in a couple centuries: public lashing. Even Andrews was skeptic about this. It was a protocol that the UNSC thought was no longer necessary, and Andrews didn't want any attention brought to him, but Spartan 130 had crossed the line for the last time. He needed to be crushed and humiliated, and if that didn't break him, nothing would. He was about to make the order, when his computer bleeped. Sitting down he access his messages. It was from Command, priority one, entitled: OPERATION DARKEST HOUR. Andrews hands trembled as he selected the message. Humanity's 'darkest hour' could only mean one thing'...

Adam got up from his nap and started his routine workout: push-ups 100 reps, sit-ups 200 reps, leg swings 50 for each leg, and lifting his cot over his head 75 times. While doing this he saw his best get back plan for Andrews.
>'Should I use it now?' he asked himself. 'nah, I'll save it for a better time.'<p>

By the time he had finished reading the message, Andrews was aghast, yet at the same time felt a bit of relief wash over him.
>"Well 130," he said aloud, "It would seem that this catastrophe has worked out for both of us." He deleted the message and left his office, proceeding to the brig.<p>

Adam lay on his cot, humming to himself, when the big man himself

entered the brig. Tom sprang up to attention and yelled "OFFICER ON DECK!" Adam didn't stand, but merely put two fingers to his temple in a mock salut. Andrews walked right up to Adams cell and stared at Spartan laying on the cot in front of him.

>"130, it's no secret that I hate your guts..."
"Really?" asked Adam in mock surprise and hurt. "Don't you think that's taking things a little to far?"

>"ME! YOUR the one whose taken it to far!" shouted Andrews. "You've been a thorn in my side since I first met you. You have no morals, no honor-" That did it. Adam sprang from his cot and marched to stand in front of the General, eyes ablaze.
"That is where you are wrong, SIR." Adam spat "My morals are to help my fellow recruits, my honor is to make sure YOU don't do damage to them because of some problem you have with me." Andrews looked slightly taken aback at this, but continued.

>"And while your costing the UNSC money for all the damage you caused, Reach has fallen."
Adam stopped.

>"What?"
"That's right. The Covenant found Reach. They swept right through all there defenses, even Noble Team. The best thing that came out of this was that Noble managed to get the Master Chief off planet. The bad part is he still hasn't turned up from his random jumps due to the Cole Protocol, and the Covenant are setting their sights on Harmony. If they destroy Harmony, ALL the remaining colonies will all be depleted of their food supply, and everyone will be starving, not just this bases recruits." Adam kept his expression emotionless, but his eyes looked like they could burn trough solid Titanium-A.

>"ONI has issued an order to the three Spartan training facilities to send their best to make a four man team, to be called Zeta squad, to give Harmony a fighting chance. This works out for the both of us, considering your the best I have 130. You'll finally Be out of my hair forever, and since you have to leave immediately, you won't be able to serve your punishment."
Adam nodded

>"Permission to prepare to leave, Sir?"
"Permission granted, Lieutenant." he replied. "Head to the armory, get some armor and equipment and get to the hangar. A pelican with the rest of your squad is inbound. Dismissed!"

Adam headed through the door to the armory, and the armorer, Damien, walked up to him.

>"Hey, Adam! What up son." the two clasped hands. "Just got word about you joinin' a squad, kinda interesting that we finally get to do legal business." Damien was secretly the one allowing Adam access to his armory and, in a matter of speaking, sharing his 'toys'.
"Yeah, this'll be interesting, considering I'm after more than some remote ordnance." Adam replied "Think you can help me with my gear?"

>"Yeah, I got somethin special made just for you." the two walked over to a large steel closet. Damien opened the door and Adam gazed at what was inside.<p>

It was a pure black suit of armor. The body was the Assault/Sapper variant, with the Zeta flaming ninja on the collarbone, but Damien had made two modifications. One was the bandoliers on the chest and belt were modified to fit throwing grenades instead of grenade launcher ammo. The second was a backpack attached to the lower back; easy to access, perfect for storing extra explosives. For extra protection, the suit had grenadier shoulder plates on both arms, and the left thigh was covered in UA/NXRA supplemental armor. Along with the grenadier knee guards and the UA/Bracer on the wrist, the armor

provided maximum defense against almost anything. The suit was crowned with a JFO helmet with a gold visor and UA attachment. The armor looked indestructible.

Adam stared at the suit until Damien broke the silence.

>"So? Whadaya Think?" he asked, looking smug.
"I-it-it's perfect." came Adams answer. "Damien you are amazing." He hit Damien playfully on the shoulder, forgetting that Damien wasn't a Spartan, and knocked him to the ground.

>"Oh Jesus, I'm sorry man." Damien picked himself off the ground.
"It's all good man, now let's get you suited up." Adam grinned and stepped into the assembly room, returning five minutes later fully armored and looking huge. Damien gazed up at his friend.

>"So? How do ya feel?"
Adam looked at his armored hands and clenched them into fists.

>"Feels strong." he replied. "Like I can take on anything. Damien, what would I ever do without you?"
"Probably be sittin on your bunk in the barracks with unknown potential because I wasn't there to give you explosives, so Andrews would never have noticed you. Now, let's get you to the weapons room."

Once the two entered the weapons room, Adam went straight to the rack of explosives, filling his backpack with C4 and alpha charges, and filling the bandoliers on his chest with frag grenades, and the one on his belt with stolen plasma grenades. Next came his weapons. His first, and obvious, choice was a rocket launcher, which he lifted up and carried over one shoulder. When it came to his secondary weapon, he stopped, unsure of what to pick.

>"If I can make a suggestion, I've been saving this for you for a long time." Said Damien. "Pick out an armor ability and I'll be back." With that, Damien disappeared into his office, and Adam went to the armor attachments. He thought for a bit, then chose a jet pack and plugged it into his back.
"Alright, here we go." Adam turned to see Damien coming out of his office with a large black case, which he set on a table in the middle of the room. Slowly, he opened the case, and Adams eyes lit up. Inside was a gleaming covenant fuel rod gun, shining yellow, with the plasma capsules glowing green and softly humming. Adam stared at Damien.

>"Where the hell did you-"
"Came in with one if the stolen tech shipments, so I kept it hidden for ya." Adam smiled

>"Damien you spoil me." Damien returned the smile.
"If you think your spoiled now, wait till you meet Stella." Adam raised an eyebrow.

>"Stella?" he asked, puzzled. Damien grinned.
"Come on down to the hangar with me."

Once they reached the hangar, the armorer led the Spartan over to a garage door in the wall. Damien grabbed the door controls.

>"Adam, I would personally like to introduce you to Stella." With that, the door slid open and Adams jaw would have hit the ground had it not been inside his helmet. Behind the door was a huge M808 MBT Scorpion tank. Brand new, indestructible. The solid Titanium-A plating gleamed. Adams eyes went first to the vehicles weapon, a 90 mm M512 Smooth Bore, High Velocity cannon, capable of putting a hole in anything that wasn't battle cruiser armor. Adam looked right at Damien.
"Damien, how-" Damien raised a finger, silencing Adam, and turned to the tank.

>"Stella, activate." he said in a commanding tone. At once the engine on the war machine roared to life, and the gun barrel swiveled to

face The armorer. Then it spoke.
"Hello Damien." it said in a synthetic female voice.

>"Hey beautiful." Damien responded. "Guess what? I'm assigning you to Adam-130 here." The tank's barrel swiveled to face Adam.
"Hello Adam-130," said the tank. "I am the M808 Main Battle Tank. You may call me Stella. It is nice to meet you." Adam finally wore out of his surprise and tried to speak to the tank, which is a lot harder than you might think.

>"Um, hi Stella. You can just call me Adam. So, you're a Smart Tank?" he asked, immediately feeling stupid.
"Yes, I am programmed to assist you while operating me, and I can operate myself if instructed to do so." Came Stella's reply. Damien patted Adam on the shoulder, having to stand on his toes to do so.

>"Yeah, you two are gonna get along just fine. And hey, if you can't rely on this new team of yours, Stella will always have your back." Adam turned to his friend.
"Man, you're the best." he said while pulling the armorer into a brother hug, being careful not to break anything. The two stood there for about a minute, Stella waiting patiently, before Damien piped up.

>"Yeah, so I gotta head back to the armory. Spend this time before your ride gets here to get to know Stella better. You take care of yourself out there, and if you put so much as a dent in her, I'll kick your ass." he grinned. Adam returned the gesture.
"I'll take good care of her. And Damien. Thanks. For everything." he gave his friend a salute. Damien returned it. "The pleasure was all mine, LT." With that, the master of the arms turned and left.

Adam spent the next three hours talking with his new tank. Stella, although she had a single tone to her voice, seemed like she had a likable personality. Adam finally felt like he could talk to her without feeling weird or scared. The two were about to go for a test drive when the hangar doors began to open.

>"I'll bet this is our ride." said Adam. When the doors were fully open, a pelican flew in. As he did with Stella, Adam's eyes immediately went to the ship's weaponry. The pelican was first and foremost a transport vehicle, but the ship did have an impressive armament: a huge machine gun was mounted on the nose of the ship, capable of swiveling around and up and down, but this one was upgraded from a 50 cal. to a 75 cal., and could reduce any organic matter to a pile of pulp. Tucked under the ship's wings were several standard mounted heavy missile pods, but Adam also noticed the barrels of the pods were slightly flared out, instead of straight all the way through, meaning the ammunition for those pods was different. One other thing that he noticed was the gracefulness of the bird in flight, so graceful even if they had a top class pilot, which he assumed it did. The ship must have a really upgraded engine. It was after he finished admiring the tech on the ship and it had set down that he realized that the pelican was painted like a shark, the machine gun sticking out of the open jaws, and the missile pods clinging to the underside of its fins like remoras. He smiled a bit, thinking that whoever flew this pelican was a bit of a daredevil.
"Yeah, this is definitely it." Mounting his rocket launcher on his shoulder, stabilizing it with a hand, and carrying the case with his fuel rod gun in the other, he made his way to the back of the pelican.

The rear hatch opened and Adam stepped in. Three Spartans were inside, watching his approach. Then the gold one stepped forward, hand outstretched.

>"Sup." he said. "Name's Sam-909." Adam set his fuel rod case down,

took the hand and shook it.
"How's it going? I'm Adam-130." Sam looked Adam up and down, taking in the two dozen >grenades on his torso, and the rocket launcher on his shoulder.
"You look like a guy who likes to blow shit up." he said with a grin, his grey eyes capturing the light. Adam returned the smile.

>"That I do." He looked Sam up and down, taking in the serrated knife on his chest, the kukuri knife on his shoulder, shotgun on his back, and the helmet tucked under his arm with the red visor that looked like a twisted grin.
"You look like a guy who likes to kill things." Sam chuckled.

>"That I do." and he went and sat down beside the maroon Spartan leaning back in his seat. Adam walked up to the soldier, who gave a half salute.
"Kyle-040." he said. His helmet was off and his eyes were closed, but Adam could tell that this sniper was fully aware of all his surroundings. "I can tell we are gonna get along." The purple Spartan sat opposite to Kyle, his helmet also off, his shoulder length blond hair all over his face. He pushed it out of his vivid blue eyes.

>"My names Chazz-013. Seems the gangs finally all here."
'Not quite.' thought Adam, thinking of his tank. At that moment, the pilot walked in from the cockpit, her silver pilots helmet tucked under her arm. She had a darker blonde color hair that fell halfway down her back, but was pulled into a ponytail. Her bangs fell over her eyes, which were a pale blue, but in the light there were bits of violet coloring to them.

>"Hey Adam," she said, smiling. "My names Jenny." Adam set his launcher on a storage rack and started talking with the pilot.
"Hi Jenny. I'm liking the gear on this bird, or fish I guess. The missile pods look intriguing. Am I right to assume that they've been upgraded to accommodate diamond tip missiles?" Jenny raised an eyebrow.

>"As a matter of fact, they are, you know your explosives." Adam shrugged.
"It's my job to. I also noticed that your engine seems heavily upgraded?" Jenny looked impressed.

>"Yeah. This shark is so powerful it could carry a tank as easily as a normal pelican can carry a mongoose." Adam smiled.
"Good, cause there's one more joining us." the other three spartans and the pilot looked slightly confused. Adam walked back to the hatch.

>"Stella, come on back here." he said, and the tank rolled over to the back. Adam looked over at the other four.
"Team, this is Stella." he turned to the tank.

>"Stella. This is the rest of our team." Stella pointed her gun barrel like an eye toward the other four.
"Hello everyone. It is a pleasure to meet all of you." she said. Kyle and Chazz gave nervous waves, but Jenny and Sam walked up to the tank and engaged it in standard conversation. Adam suspected that it was because Jenny, being a pilot, always thought of vehicles as living things, and Sam just had the air of someone who was... well, insane.

>"Ok." Said Jenny. "As soon as we hitch Stella to the ship we can get out of here." The five teammates all pitched in to help get Stella safely attached to the back of the pelican.<p>

They were just double checking the clamps, when Keith ran into the hangar and came up to Adam.

>"Hey, I just got word that your leaving." he said, panting.
"Yeah I am." Adam replied. Keith looked down.

>"What are the rest of us gonna do without you. If your gone, whose gonna keep the pressure on Andrews so that he didn't kill us off?" Adam chuckled.
"I don't think he'll be doing that anymore, and even if he does, you guys are still Spartans." Adam began to reply,

then he got an idea. "Hey, after I leave, check under the cot in my cell in the brig. There's something in there for you. Save it for a celebration. I've gotta go now, so become the best you can." the two shook hands, and Adam boarded the pelican and they took off.

As the pelican roared through space towards their stealth cruiser, 'the midnight shadow' the four Spartans sat in silence. Adam finally asked the question.

>"So how are we gonna stop the Covenant?" Sam pulled both his knives out of their sheaths and began spinning them around his fingers at a speed that even a Spartan could not follow.
"I say we just wait for them and kill em all."

>Kyle opened his striking green eyes and rolled them.
"Okay Sam. I know your all about doing the impossible, but even you couldn't pull that off." Sam sheathed his knives and was about to counter the maroon sniper, when Chazz stopped him.

>"Worrying about this now is pointless." He said. "ONI brought us together because we're supposed to be the best. If the Covenant have decided to go to Harmony, then we are being sent there to tell them that they aren't welcome." He put a hand to the emblem on his collarbone. "If you ask me, this symbol is a combination of all of us." He pointed with a finger to the ninja. "The ninja is a killer, quick," he pointed to himself, "and silent." he pointed to Kyle. He then moved to the flames and buzz saw around the ninjas head.
"The flames represent destruction," he pointed to Adam, "and the buzz saw represents lethal intent." he finally pointed to Sam. "When you put these four things together, you get a truly unstoppable force. You get Zeta squad." The other three looked impressed. The four looked amongst each other and saw what Chazz was saying: alone they were strong, but together, the team was truly invincible. They might just pull this off.

**You know what? I always stay at the end of movies and watch the whole credit reel, in hopes that there will be some extra scene at the end. Whenever there isn't I feel really sad, so if I ever make a movie, there shall always be an extra scene at the end of the credits. I'm not quite sure I just said that but, hey, that's the end of the chapter. The main story will now be starting, but the update might not come out every week. I will be putting these up when I complete them, so it may take less than a week, or longer, because I have to keep up with school, fencing, gaming, sleeping, and just being awesome. Well that should be about everything. My thanks to stelladea and JuneFiction909, (who by the way shares my number, purly by coincidence.) for inspiring me to take up writing, and for my friends Kyle(JohnDoe04), Adam(Jericholl23), and Chazz(no account) for proofreading the drafts, as well as Bungie Studios for making an awesome community that many talented people can add to. Signing off for now. TAH. ;) **

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Just after the pelican left the hangar, Keith immediately ran to the brig. Entering Adams empty cell, he found the gift Adam had left for him taped to the underside of his cot. It was a detonator. Not an alpha charge detonator, but a detonator linked to C4. On the detonator was a label that read 'General Andrews NOT SO Secret living quarters'. The general was currently in his office, working on a replacement for Adam. Keith grinned. Adam had said that he should save it for a time to celebrate. Keith knew exactly what his

celebration would be. 'What better celebration is there than Adams promotion?' Keith thought, and he pressed the button.

4. Chapter 1

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

****Authors Note:** Greetings, one and all. the main story is finally beginning. It's about time that the plot actually started. This chapter is what I had before I decided to make a prologue, so it has a bit of a prologueish style to it. The story will really start to kick off soon, so bare with me. Whats more, there shall likely not be much author's notes from here on, unless there is a necessity, like some confusion among the readers. Well, here you are. Hope you have as much fun reading this as i did writing it, and as always, please read and reveiw. Enjoy. ;) **

****Disclamer:** I do not own Halo. It is owned by Microsoft Game Studios and 343 Industries. **

Chapter 1: Covenant? Meet Zeta!

The city was under attack. Explosions erupted everywhere in clouds of yellow-black and electric blue. Bullets and Plasma flew through the air. The Covenant was pushing the marines back through the city. Warthog's exploded, ghosts flew to pieces. Banshees and falcons circled each other.

Chazz-013, also known now as Zeta-1, ran across the street. Spotting a dumpster that would provide good cover, while running full force, he made a forward leap, tucked into a ball, hit the ground and rolled in behind the dumpster. Pulling the DMR off his back, scanned the surrounding buildings. He knew the marines could handle the enemies on the streets...

There. Two elites. Two in a room in a building, looking through two adjacent windows, and one elite on the roof. The two elites in the windows had needle rifles and the one on the roof had a focus rifle. They were taking pot shots on some marines hiding behind some cars while a pack of grunts were advancing on them. Chazz decided the elite on the roof would go first. He took aim and fired. Four shots, and the elites shields failed, and one more right in the mouth to silence it. As for the other two, Chazz shouldered his DMR and pulled the grenade launcher off his back. Setting up his angle, he squeezed the trigger and held on. The grenade flew threw the air in a graceful arc, entered one of the elites windows and came to rest between the two aliens. Chazz released the trigger and the grenade exploded, killing both elites at once. The marines that had been pinned down behind the cars recovered from the mini siege and charged the advancing grunts.

'_That should help them_' thought Chazz, putting his grenade launcher away. Suddenly his motion tracker lit up with dozens if contacts, all scurrying in different directions. It was the effect of elite active cammo. Chazz glanced left and right, trying to find the split-jaw before it found him. At that moment, a voice echoed in his mind. It was his old drill sergeant, yelling at him for something.

>'Dammit, Private. How many times do I gotta tell you to look

behind you!' Chazz spun around and brought his arms up. Something thudded onto his arms, it was a column of shimmering air, with an elite energy wrist blade on the end. Chazz grabbed the blade arm with one hand and caught the elites other hand while it was trying to punch him. The Spartan and the shimmering air locked into a battle of strength. Chazz flipped on his night vision, even though it was daytime. The green tint to his vision created an outline of the elite, allowing Chazz to see him better. He could now see the two other spec-ops elites advancing on him also, their plasma rifles currently at bay.

>'Oh great.' thought Chazz. The elite he was grappling with was slowly winning, and its friends were advancing on him, their own wrist blades energizing.

At that moment, Chaz heard another voice. Not from his mind like the Sarge was, but a voice from his helmet comms.

>"Wanna live? Tilt your left shoulder 20 degrees to your right." Chazz didn't understand why someone would tell him to do that, but he recognized the voice, so he trusted him, to some extent. He shifted his arm so that his CQC shoulder was pointing right at the elite he was fighting.<p>

Then everything happens at once. A large CRACK sounded, Chazz was hit so hard he fell over, and all three elites fell dead. Chazz leaped to his feet, his arm slightly numb. Going over what just happened in his mind, he concluded that his teammate had just saved his life. A sniper round had passed through one elites head, struck Chazz's large shoulder plate and rebounded into the other two elites heads. Chazz looked up and found the source of the bullet.

Kyle-040, Zeta-2, faded out of his active camo armor ability and crouched beside a large vent protruding from a roof, his maroon armor blending to the brick. He was quite impressed with himself. Down below, he saw Chazz looking up at him.

>"Thanks man." he said "Where did you learn that?" Kyle grinned behind his visor.
"About 10 seconds ago." Chazz visibly shook.

>"How did you know that wasn't gonna kill me?" Kyle remained grinning.
"Chazz, there are some things in this world that you just don't ask." With that, Chazz, cursing under his breath, ran off back to the fight, and Kyle resumed his sniping. He was still relishing in the crap he had scared out of Chazz that he did not realize the pair of elites that had reached the roof of the building. It was an officer and a cadet in charge of protecting him. At the sight of the red human, the cadet growled and raised his plasma rifle. The officer held up a hand, stopping the inexperienced elite. HE would have the honor of killing the demon. The officer pulled out his sword and began his advance. He took no more than two steps when he heard a choked roar. The elite spun around and saw only three things. One was his cadet, dead on the floor, with a large knife embedded in his throat. The second was the barrel of a shotgun pointed at his face. The third was the gold face with a red mouth smiling evilly up at him.

>'Sup.'<p>

Sam-909, Zeta-3, hung his shotgun on his back and stooped down to the two elite bodies in front of him. After yanking his kukuri knife out of the blue elites neck, he wiped the purple blood off it using the hand of the orange one. He then salvaged some grenades from both elites, and grabbed the orange elites sword, deactivated it, and

stored it in the soft pouch on his thigh. Getting up, he glanced over at his teammate, who still didn't realize what just happened.

>'He's so absorbed on shooting things.' Sam thought with a smirk. He turned to leave when he heard a whining noise. A squadron of banshees, nine in total, all veered towards the building, coming up on Kyle.

>"Oh damn!" yelled Sam, 'He's so absorbed on shooting things!' Sam didn't have time to warn his friend or come up with a plan, so he just ran straight for Kyle.
"HEADS UP!" he yelled at the sniper. Kyle turned towards Sam, and Sam knocked Kyle off the building. The nine banshees each released a fuel rod bomb, sailing right were Kyle had been, which was where Sam still stood. Sam braced himself and fell to one knee just as he was engulfed in green light.

Kyle didn't understand. He had been picking off the enemy forces when Sam had suddenly been there. He yelled something at him and pushed him off the building. While falling, Kyle took in the banshee squadron flying in, and Sam being swallowed by a massive green explosion.

>"NO!" Kyle screamed. He landed in a pile of garbage bags on the roof of a lower building beside the one he had been on. He didn't get up for a second. How could his best friend be gone just like that. What would happen to-

>"Ow. What's with the yelling? Your gonna blow my ears out." said a voice over the comms, making Kyle straighten.
"Sam?" he said aloud. He looked up at the roof of the other building. The green light was dissipating, and Kyle saw Sam, down on one knee, with his fist slammed into the ground. An electric blue field of indestructible energy surrounded the Spartan. Sam disengaged his armor lock, stood, and turned to Kyle.

>"If your not too busy staring at my awesome," he said, his voice full of confidence "Those banshees are coming around."<p>

Kyle shook himself.

>"Alright, I'll deal with you later." he called to Sam, and turned to the enemy fliers. The nine fighters were flying low in a V-formation, circling around in the air trying to spot something to kill.
'_Alright then_' he lifted his rifle, aiming for the lead banshee, and fired a round which tore its right wing off. The banshee pulled hard to the left and hit its wingman, causing the two to explode. The remaining banshees scattered. One discovered Kyle's location and zoomed toward him, plasma cannons blazing. Kyle dove behind the piles of trash and set his rifle up against it, tracking the banshees flight path. The covenant pilot was flying low to get a good shot, so low that it was level with the roof of the first building he was on. Kyle smiled, set his rifle down and counted down on his fingers

>'Three...Two...One...' he snapped his fingers. As the banshee glided past the taller building, a streak of gold leaped off the roof of the building and landed on the top of the purple flying machine. Sam stuck his shotgun into the cockpit at fired, killing the elite inside. He then primed all four plasma grenades he had salvaged, and stuck them on one side of the hull, and pushed off. The force of Sam pushing off sent the banshee crashing into the ground, hitting a revenant. Then the grenades detonated. Completely scrapping the banshee and blowing up the revenant. Sam landed in the garbage pile right in front of Kyle.

>"Tah-Dah." he said. Kyle rolled his eyes under his helmet, and the two faced the remaining six banshees. They were about to get moving

when a voice came in on the comms.
"Looks like you guys have a fly problem. Let us deal with that." and with that, there was a thundering** BOOM**, and one of the banshees exploded. Kyle and Sam looked down and saw a familiar scorpion tank in the streets. They looked at each other, then sat back to enjoy the fireworks.

"Nice shot Stella." said Adam-130, Zeta 4, to his tank.
>"Thank you Adam." the tank replied. Adam sat in the drivers seat of the tank scanning for another target.
"Another banshee, 10 o'clock, veering to the right." Stella swiveled her gun barrel and fired. The explosive round tore into the banshee and detonated, sending the banshee spiraling through the air, trailing blue smoke, before exploding. Over the comms, Adam could hear Sam cheering.

>"Whoo! Damn, you two really know how to put on a show." Next came Kyle's voice.
"Sam, there're some more troops advancing on our position." Sam pouted.
>"Aww. Just while I was enjoying myself." With that Zetas 2 and 3 left the comms. Adam returned to the banshees.<p>

Two were flying in their direction. Stella was trying to shoot them down, but these pilots were able to evade the cannon fire.
>"Adam, the two approaching banshees are fast." said Stella "I cannot land a shot on them." Adam already saw that, and had a counter measure.
"Alright, Stella. Let's try s catapult maneuver. On my mark." Adam retracted the tanks canopy over his head.
>"Mark!" Stella activated the ejection system, which fired Adam into the sky. Triggering his jet pack, Adam flew towards the oncoming banshees. Hefting his rocket launcher on his shoulder, he took aim, locked on, and launched a rocket at the farthest banshee. The covenant vehicle swerved and tried to get away, but the guided rocket followed it and struck it in the right engine, causing a chain reaction that tore the banshee apart. The closer one was no more than 20 feet away, so Adam changed to his fuel rod gun and unleashed three rounds. The plasma bombs struck the front of the banshee, the first boiling its armor away, the second killing the pilot, and the third blew the craft to pieces.<p>

Adam was beginning his decent when suddenly his shield flared. The spun in midair to see the remaining two banshees accelerating towards him, firing their guns. They were to far away for the fuel rod to be accurate, and it would take to long for his rockets to lock on. What's more, Adams jet pack was beginning to overheat. He had enough time to safely land, so he would be a sitting duck.

>"Stella?" he called to his tank "The last two banshees are coming up on me and I'm a bit of a sitting duck." Stella was also a little busy.
"I am sorry Adam, but a group of ground soldiers have engaged me." Adam looked down to see a ghost patrol attacking his tank.

>'She's better off than me' he thought.

>"Well, seems like your almost out of options Adam." said a female voice. At that moment, a very shark like pelican flew in from around a building. Jenny, the pilot, spun the pelican around and fired a missile. The diamond tip explosive device tore a hole right through one banshee and hit the second, causing both to explode at the same time.
"Whhoooo Yeeaaaahhhh!" yelled Jenny. With that she flew off to attack more ground troops.

Adam grinned.

>"Thanks for that." he called. He turned back as he was controlled

falling back to the ground, and his eyes widened in horror.
"Stella, you've got a bad guy on your tail!" An Ultra Elite had made a run for it, and jumped on the back of the scorpion, a plasma grenade primed.

>"I got it." Chazz ran up from around a corner and tackled the elite off the tank. He then primed the grenade and rammed it down the elite's throat. No one even stopped to look at what happened to the elite. Chazz saw a line of artillery grunts lined up to unleash hell on Stella.
"Crap!" yelled Chazz. He ran in front of Stella just as the grunts all fired. Chazz triggered his drop shield, stopping all the fuel rod rounds, but then vanished. Chazz couldn't stop it a second time. Then a rocket flew from the sky and killed the grunts. Adam touched down on the ground and looked back at Chazz.

>"Thanks for that." Chazz nodded.
"No problem. Now let's finish this fight."

With no more air support, the Covenant was growing weaker, and the marines now went on the offensive. Chazz got a seat in the turret of a warthog and unleashed hell. Jenny flew low over the mass of covenant forces, her 75 cal. machine gun tearing them up. An elite hefted a fuel rod gun and tracked the pelican's movement. It was about to fire when a sniper round tore through its head. Kyle then shot a brute, passing through its helmet and head and hitting a hunter in its exposed back, killing it instantly. An Anti-Air wraith locked on to Jenny, but Sam leaped on top of it, and punched a hole through the hatch, an elite looked up at him. Sam smiled and dropped a grenade in the driver's seat. He then reached in and triggered the wraith's boost ability, causing it to accelerate into a horde of enemies, running a bunch over. Sam jumped off and activated his armor lock just as the wraith exploded, vaporizing everything in a five yard radius. Sam popped out of lock and charged a pack of brutes, his SMG rattling. Adam and Stella together brought down a scarab, the Covenant's last hope. The battle had turned exponentially, until the tensing aliens were surrounded from all sides. Soon they killed them. All but one. Jenny radioed the cruiser in orbit.

>"Midnight Shadow, this is pelican Juliet-Seven-Two-Niner. The enemies have either been neutralized or have run away in small groups."
"Very good, Seven-Two-Niner." said the commander of the Shadow, Admiral Jesse "Pick up the miracle boys and come home."

>"Copy Midnight Shadow, over and out."<p>

The four Spartans all advanced on the elite Zealot, the last remaining enemy. It stared at the four Spartans, its eyes burning with hate. Adam took a step towards it.

>"I'll bet that didn't go as you planned." the Elite roared in rage and charged Adam, with no weapon. For that it received a sniper round in one foot from Kyle and a DMR round in its other foot from Chazz. The Zealot fell to its knees. Sam strolled up and squatted so that he stared it right in the face.
"Now that was bad manners. I should make you apologize to my friend here." The elite snapped its mandibles at him.

>"You dare mock me, Demons?" it hissed. Sam cocked his head to one side.
"Yeah, I've been wanting to ask you guys about that." and he pulled his helmet off, his grey eyes piercing the elite's.

>"Why do you only call us 'Demons'? Were humans like them." he pointed to a group of marines. "Why don't you call them demons?" The Zealot gave a growl and didn't reply.
"Oh well." said Sam, shrugging. He then pulled out the serrated knife on his chest. The

elite didn't even flinch.

>"There are others. More will come. This world will soon burn." Sam leaned in so he was right in the elites face, and brandished his knife.
"Let's see them try."

5. Chapter 2

The Untold Story Of Zeta Squad

Chapter 2: Planning

The Midnight Shadow glided slowly through space, orbiting Harmony unseen. UNSC ships hulls were usually the dull grey color of their titanium-A armor, but since the Shadow was a stealth cruiser, it was pure black. This is because the hull was made of titanium-A laced with carbon fiber, making the ship harder to see visually and with sensor equipment. Stealth ships usually don't have much firepower, since they are mainly used to sneak behind enemy lines for reconnaissance, but this ship was a destroyer, designed to get around the enemy and strike them from behind. For this reason, the ship was armed with two MAC cannons on the bow, two rail guns on each side, and 250 Archer missile pods honeycombed throughout the hull. It was one of the fiercest ships left in the fleet, and the current home to Zeta Squad.

The hangar doors opened and the shark flew in, with Stella attached to the back. The pelican set down and the four Spartans got out of the back. Kyle took his helmet off and shook his head.

>"Well that was interesting." he said with a yawn. Chazz took his own helmet off and gave Kyle a half glare. Kyle raised an eyebrow.
"What?" he asked.

>"I still haven't forgiven you for nearly tearing my arm off." Chazz muttered. Kyle smirked.
"Aww, come on. I was 60% sure that it wouldn't. Mainly because of your shoulder piece."

>"And what if you were wrong?" Chazz returned.
"What's wrong boys?" said Sam, walking up to them, his own helmet under his arm, "Trouble between you two?" Kyle turned around and smacked Sam in the face. Sam recoiled backwards. Kyle glared at Sam.

>"That's for nearly giving me a heart attack because you nearly died." Sam began laughing his head off.
"I know. That was priceless. You were all worried and junk." Kyle dropped his helmet and ran at Sam, who dropped his own helmet and ran away, Kyle chasing him. Chazz and Adam watched them for awhile.

>"Bet 20 credits Kyle will kick his ass." said Adam. Chazz smiled and shook his head.
"Nah. Sam's gonna keep away long enough for Kyle to burn off his frustration, then their both gonna come back laughing together." Adam looked back at the gold and maroon Spartans.

>"Yeah, your probably right. In the meantime, why don't we unhitch Stella?" Chazz nodded and they got to work.<p>

After the two had detached the tank and Adam put her in storage, the two sat there and played rock paper scissors. Adam gave up awhile later because Chazz kept winning (purely because Adam always picked rock), and Sam and Kyle both came back at the same time, both of them laughing. Adam and Chazz looked at each other. Then Adam turned to the two.

>"Done?"
"Yeah, I'd say so." said Sam. He then looked around, "Where's Jenny?"

>"She had to go check on her pilots. She'll be around." said Chazz. Jenny was the C.A.G of the ship, so she had other duties to do while they were on board. Sam shrugged.
"Well, I'm gonna head to my quarters. See you guys later." with that the four Spartans went their own separate ways.

Sam entered his quarters and began removing his armor and changing into simple fatigues. After setting his armor in his storage locker along with his guns, he removed his knives from their sheaths, and took the stolen energy sword from his thigh pouch. This he hung on his wall. Several more lined his wall, aligned into the creation of the elite mark of shame. He may be crazy, but Sam actually took the time to learn about covenant lore, mainly to shove it down their throats when he killed them. The swords on the wall was symbolic.

>'Not only were you killed by one, but you got your prized weapon stolen by a HUMAN, how shameful.' Sam thought to himself. His mark was almost complete. He needed only two more swords to complete it. Sam looked at the wall one last time, satisfied, then went to clean his knives.

Kyle finished typing on his personals computer pad and set it down on his desk. He had been keeping a journal since early on in his training. It helped him wind down. Getting off his bunk, he picked up his sniper rifle, which was leaning against the wall. Sitting down in his desk chair, he disassembled it and laid all the pieces on the desk. Taking a cleaning rag in his hands and opening a container of cleaning fluid, he took each individual piece, let it soak, and wiped it clean. The gun wasn't actually not working or dirty, but he did this after every mission. It was a bad joke with snipers, that they over clean their rifles, but it was true. It was just what they did. Some do it for certain reasons. Kyle did it to reflect on things. Things like: how had the battle had been going? What were casualties, human and covenant?... How much longer were they gonna last? It was at times like this that he wished he was as carefree as Sam. All he needed to do was kill things and insult them. Kyle tried as hard as he could, but he always had to think about things.
>'Oh well.' he thought to himself, '_We all have ways of staying human_.'

Adam did not stay in his quarters after removing his armor. Instead, he returned to the hangar and removed Stella out of storage. The tank came online and looked at Adam.

>"Hello Adam." she said in her emotionless voice.
"Hey there. You were awesome out there today. I just figured that I'd come down and clean you off, you earned it." Stella had a buildup of soot on her plating from the battle, some plasma scorch marks from some ghosts, and her gun barrel was black from firing a lot. Adam opened a storage locker and grabbed a large brush on a pole, as well as some water and some soap. There was a silence between them as Adam scrubbed the tank clean. Adam enjoyed the quiet. Then Stella broke the silence.

>"Adam?"
"Yeah?"

>"I would just like to say... thank you for saving me." Adam smiled.
"No problem, it wasn't just me either. I wouldn't have been able to do anything if Chazz hadn't stopped those grunts first." Stella rumbled her engine,

>"Well then, please extend my thanks to Chazz as well." Adam patted one of his tanks treads.
"Hey, were a team. We all cover each others backs."

Chazz retired his armor to it's locker and proceeded to the training facility of the ship. With surviving battles came realization. Chazz realized that although he was quick enough, if he had to come to a battle of strength with an elite, let alone a brute, he needed to know how to fight someone stronger than him. When he arrived he found a group of ODSs wrestling on the mats. He walked up to them.

>"Hey there." he said. The helljumpers stopped what they were doing and turned to the Spartan. As per the normal, the ODSs and the Spartans had a bitter rivalry. The crew of the 'Shadow' was used to working with the super soldiers, but they weren't friends.
"Well well. Look whose back from fighting." said one helljumper, his voice dripping with sarcasm, "And what can we do for you Spartan?" Chazz sized them up.

>"Which one of you is the toughest, strength wise?" he asked. The marines looked at one another. Then the first one turned back to Chazz.
"Why do you want to know?" he asked. Chazz motioned towards the fighting ring.

>"Cause whoever that is gets the chance to try to overpower me." The ODS looked at each other again. Then one stepped forwards. He was about six inches taller than the rest of him, almost as tall as the Spartan. His arms were huge, muscles bulging out of his arms. If you stood the two together, the ODS looked more threatening than Chazz. The marine walked into the locker room. He returned with an injection of some kind of injection. Chazz raised an eyebrow. The ODS injected himself.
"I'm not stupid, Spartan. I know you guys are so jacked up that you can take any 'normal' human." Now Chazz understood. The ODS had taken what the soldiers call a rumble drug. It was a drug cocktail made by the insurrection to fight Spartans. The problem was they weren't good for your health. The ODS meant business.

The two faced each other in the ring, then they locked arms and began. With the drug in his system, the ODS had the upper hand. Chazz could feel himself getting slowly bent backwards. Chazz struggled, trying to keep from being pushed, when he realized the method the helljumper was using. He was putting all his force into his arms and little in his legs. Chazz saw this and came up with a plan. He braced his shoulders, then bent his legs. The sudden shift in direction of force made the ODS stumble.

>"*Checkmate*" Chazz thought. He stepped into the helljumper's stumble, grabbed him, and flipped him over his shoulder. The large soldier landed with a thud on the ring floor. Chazz held out his hand.

>"Thanks. That was really helpful." The ODS grumbled and got himself up.
"Alright Spartan. Let's go again. You won't get me like that again." Chazz was about to accept when the loudspeaker came on.

>"Zeta squad, report to the bridge, battle ready." Chazz looked at the shock trooper and shrugged.
"Guess I have to go. If I were you, I'd check into the infirmary before the side effects of those drugs kick in." With that, the Spartan left the group of ODSs standing there.

Lieutenant Admiral Jesse stared out the bridge window of the 'Shadow' at the gold glowing planet in front of him, his hands clasped behind his back. The covenant had been arriving in their cloaked ships, dropping off ground forces, then leaving. They must not have thought that this planet would put up much resistance.

>"*The thing is, they probably don't realize that this planet is one of the big three*." he thought to himself. The three planets

that would ensure our survival: Reach, our symbol of power, Earth, our symbol of hope, and Harmony, our symbol of well being. Humanity lost its power, to lose either of the others would mean the end. Jesse could not let that happen. He was in charge of the small fleet of ships left to defend this world, the rest had been pulled back to Earth, and he would lead them till he died.

"Sir." came a voice behind him. He turned around to see four armored Spartans standing at attention, their helmets tucked under there arms.

>"At ease gentlemen." the soldiers relaxed and joined The lieutenant admiral at the holo desk, a large platform that was currently projecting a hologram of the planet below them. Jesse placed his hands on the edge of the desk.
"Alright, here's what's happening." he began, "The covenant have ransacked one of our military research bases and have stolen a large data core." An image of an elite carrying the large core with both arms appeared. "They have retreated with it to a large structure in a cliff area." the image of the planet zoomed in to a rocky cliff area, where a large tower stood, its purple material glimmering. It stood roughly 100 meters tall, had a large base and a round top, with balcony made of dense plasma.

>"The area used to contain a mining facility, but it was abandoned years ago. The covenant have scrapped most of it but there might be some parts left of it. The building, which shall be given the name 'Spire', is essentially comprised of the base and the top. The top is connected to the base by two very large grav-lifts. We have reason to believe that the data core will be at the top. There are also two large communications arrays set up along a slope not far off from the spire, which are broadcasting to other covenant forces." the image of the cliff scrolled over to a rocky slope, with two mounted sensor arrays on either side of the top of the slope. "Your mission is to disable these arrays, infiltrate the spire, without setting off an alarm, secure the core and bring it back. If you run into any opposition, deal with them, but don't go looking for stuff to kill." Jesse looked at Sam, who frowned. "We want to study how the covenant forces will react to an infiltration mission. This means that the spire still has to be standing when you leave." he directed his gaze at Adam this time, how frowned himself. Kyle pointed at the hologram.
"Whats our L.Z and pick up areas?" he asked. Jesse tired back to the board.

>"A pair of falcons will drop you off at this location," he pointed at a stream at the bottom of the slope, "And pelican Juliet-seven-two-niner will be at this location for dust off." he pointed to a landing zone a little a ways from the spire. Chazz cleared his throat.
"How do we get in?" he asked.

>"Couldn't we just use the front door?" Said Sam, grinning. Jesse spun the map back to the spire.
"There seems to be one entrance, but it is locked at all times. As far as getting in, you four will have to figure it out on your own. Are we clear?" the four snapped back to attention and saluted.

>"Yes sir!" they all called simultaneously. The Admiral stood up straight.
"Then go get it done."

6. Chapter 3

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad.

****There Insanepyro, happy now. ;) ****

Chapter three: They Never Saw Us Coming

Darkness fell upon the cliff side. The sun had finally gone down, and Zeta set out towards the Spire. The two falcons flew side by side, Sam and Kyle in one, Chazz and Adam in another. They flew slowly forwards, trying not to arouse suspicion.

>"So, how are we gonna do this?" asked Sam over the comms. The others had turned down all of his ideas so far, because they all involved attracting the attention of the entire population of the Spire.
"Well," said Chazz, "the way I see it, there are two communications arrays, and two grab lifts that make it to the top."

>"So two teams?" asked Kyle.
"Two teams." Chazz confirmed.

>"So how do we break it down?" asked Sam, "Current teams?" By that he meant the way the team was divided in the falcons: Kyle and himself as one team, Chazz and Adam as the other.
"Not gonna work." said Adam, "You two can't be trusted to do this thing quiet. What's more, Chazz and I have to be on opposite teams. He needs to hack the front door, and I need to create a back door. So for once were gonna have to split up the dream team." Sam looked a little sullen at this, but the piqued up again.

>"Alright, then I call the front door." Kyle shook his head.
"Alright then. Sam and Chazz will go up the left along the cliff edge to their array, then they head for the door. Adam and I will head up the cliff wall then sneak in the back. Clear?" The four Spartans blinked their acknowledgment lights. They had to be quiet, so Sam and Kyle screwed suppressors onto their SMG and magnum respectively. Chazz pulled the bolt back on his DMR and was rewarded with a satisfying *clack*. Adam left his rocket launcher on the Shadow, and took an assault rifle instead.

>"Wanna race to the top?" asked Sam to the rest of them. All four Spartans grinned at the idea.
"Your on." said Kyle. The falcons flew over the final rise and the spire came into view. The structure was covered in a dome made of some kind of energy. The falcons touched down right in front of it.

>"This dome has some kind of EMP to it." said one of the pilots, "This is as far as we can go. Good luck." with that, Zeta squad jumped out of the falcons.
"Thanks." said Sam, "But were not gonna need it."

The moon cast a low light on the cliff. Kyle and Adam crouched behind a large rock, Kyle peering over the side, looking up the slope through his sniper rifle scope. The slope beside the cliff wall had a straight path to the top. The Spartans helmets were sealed so that no noise could get out, so they communicated through their squad comms.

>"Ok." he said to Adam, "There is a pack of five grunts that patrol the path every 7 minutes. There's also a jackal standing watch on an outcropping near the array. I reckon there'll be an elite monitoring the array. There are some fallen pipes along the right hand side, up against the cliff wall. I'll go up through those and take the grunts. You move up the rocks on the left and take the jackal." Adam nodded.<p>

Chazz and Sam stood at the base of the slope. Chazz had gone scout the area. He was faster than Sam and his armor was less obnoxious.

>"Alright, there are two ways to get to the array: There is a tunnel looking thing under that rock." he pointed to a massive rock, "It may

have been a mining tunnel at one point but the tracks are gone. To the right of the rock is a pathway that can lead to either array. There is another tunnel beyond the path that leads right to our array. A squad of grunts comes through the mining tunnel every 7 minutes, loops around the path, and returns to the array. Three minutes after those grunts are lost from view, another pack comes from the other sensor array, so the best way to take out the grunts is in the first tunnel. What's more, there is a needle rifle jackal on top of that rock. There is an elite monitoring the array and a skirmisher patrolling the perimeter. Thoughts?" Sam looked back up at the rock again.
"I can't take the jackal without causing an uproar," he said matter-of-factly. "so how bout this: You climb the rock and take out the jackal, and I'll head into the tunnel. From there I'll take out the grunts while they pass by, then head around, up the path, through the other tunnel to the array. Anything to add?" Chazz nodded.
>"Sounds good."<p>

"Alright, go." Kyle ran up from the rock and dove for the pipe. It was big enough that he could crouch walk through it, so he slung his rifle over his back, drew his magnum, and crept forward. Once he reached the end of the pipe, he cautiously peered around, and waited. After three minutes, the grunts came back around, walking erratically due to tiredness and boredom. As they plodded past the pipe on their patrol, Kyle looked over at the jackal, who was gazing off into the sky. Even with his night vision, it took Kyle a moment to spot Adam, his black armor invisible on the shadows. He was standing right under the jackal's vantage point, his head two feet away from the jackals feet. Kyle checked his pistol again then blinked his green status light to Adam, who returned it. Kyle tensed up and pinged his blue light, which meant GO. Adam reach up and grabbed the jackal by the foot and yanked it over the edge of its elevation. Adam smashed the jackal into the ground and bashed its head in with the butt of his assault rifle. Kyle fired five silent shots in succession, and all five grunts dropped. Kyle holstered his pistol and ran up to the grunt bodies. He grabbed two and brought them back to the pipe to hide them. He did the same with two more grunts, and Adam brought the last one and his jackal. The two then made their way up into a cluster of rocks where the sensor array stood, a single elite was monitoring the console, oblivious to what happened to his patrol. Adam ran up, jumped on the elite's back, and snapped it's heavy neck. Adam caught the body to lessen the noise.
>"Well that wasn't so bad." he said.
"Not bad at all." Kyle agreed. Adam then removed a large disruptor device from his

>backpack and attached it to the underside of the array, effectively disabling it.<p>

Chazz crept up the side of the rock, being careful not to make any noise. Slowly he reached the top. The jackal was standing near the opposite edge of the rock, looking down at the sensor array, its needle rifle hanging loosely in its hands. Chazz approached it from behind, unsheathed his knife, grabbed the jackal's arm, pulled it off its feet, stabbed it in the top of the head and brought The knife to the ground. Chazz then got down on his stomach and grabbed the needle rifle. It would make less noise than his DMR. He trained it on the array area. Below him, in the tunnel, Sam hid behind a rock till the grunts came by. He casually followed behind them for a few feet, then got to business. He reached out and snapped one grunts neck, then stabbed another in the head. The remaining three continued on,

oblivious. Sam cocked his M7S and opened fire. The suppressor dimmed the guns noise so it only sounded like a pea shooter. The bullets tore holes in the grunts methane tanks. The Unggoy fell to the ground, suffocating. After tossing all the grunt bodies in a corner, Sam returned through the entrance of the tunnel, looped around and ran up the path. He found the tunnel that Chazz had mentioned, and entered it. As he was coming up on the exit, a red light went off on his HUD. Chazz was warning him about something. Sam approached the exit cautiously. He withdrew a fiber optics camera from his thigh pouch and fed it around the corner, attaching the other end to a port on his helmet. The camera feed popped up on his helmet, showing footage of the array. The reason Chazz had stopped him was because the elite was at a console on the array, arranged so that it can keep an eye on the tunnel. The skirmisher was prowling around behind it. Then a large pink needle flew from atop the rock and pierced the skirmisher's skull. The small alien fell to the ground, dead, causing the elite to turn around. A blue light blinked in Sam's helmet. He yanked the cable from his helmet and ran out of the tunnel, his kukuri in his hands. He came up behind the elite, sliced the tendons in its back leg, causing it to fall. Sam flipped the knife in his hand, and slammed the blade into the side of the elite's head.

>"Well that was fun." said Sam with a grin, then proceeded to mount the disruptor on the array.<p>

Kyle and Adam slowly proceeded up the top of the hill to the ridge line to where the Spire stood. Strange yellow mini-lifts circled it. The two were wondering what they were for when Adam saw an elite jump off the top of the spire, hit one of the lifts, float up a bit and land gracefully on the ground. The two Spartans recorded this and continued on. Kyle found an old conveyer belt mounted on stilts high above the ground. He marked it on his HUD, thus marking it on Adam's as well. Adam understood what he meant. They inched their way up till they were under the conveyor belt, then Adam grabbed Kyle by the underside of his shoulders and triggered his jet pack. He flew up to the top of the belt and tossed Kyle on it. Kyle landed with a small thud.

>"Ow" he remarked. Adam smiled and returned to the ground. Kyle crawled to the end of the belt and set up his sniper rifle.<p>

From atop his rock, Chazz scanned the area through the scope of his DMR while Sam finished setting the disruptor. The second pack of grunts hadn't come back around for awhile.

>'Kyle and Adam must have dealt with them.' he thought. Turning back to the cliff edge, he spotted movement. Up the at the very top of the slope and to the left of the ridge was a covenant bunker. The doors had opened and an elite ranger was approaching their position.

>"Sam, you've got a Ranger coming up on your position. Must be coming to check up on the arrays." Sam blinked his green light. He then grabbed the dead elites body and dragged it out to a spot of clear visibility, then melted back into the tunnel. The Ranger reached the top of the slope and found the other elite face down on the ground. It ran up and knelt to the body, and Sam walked right up behind it. The elite spun around to face Sam, who waved. In a flash, both his knives were in his hands and he plunged them into the elite, his serrated one in a chink in it's chest armor, his kukuri right through the elites full face helmet. Sam twirled his knives a bit before re-sheathing them and looking up at Chazz.
"Crisis averted." he said.

>"Not quite." replied Chazz, "That bunker will have more guys in it, and they'll start to wonder where their friend went." Sam looked up the slope in the direction of the bunker.
"And I suppose you have a plan?" he asked. Chazz began climbing down the rock, a sly smile spreading on his face.
>" I think we can use one of your tactics this time."<p>

Adam weaved through the rocks, slowly making his way towards the spire. He peered through the rocks, trying to select a good spot to make his 'back door', when he heard footsteps; big, lumbering footsteps. Adam pulled back into the rocks with a start. Two hunters stomped past his hiding place, two elites bringing up the rear. They walked around the area, stopped for a bit, then moved on to another area, farther down the perimeter of the Spire.

>'Hunters.' thought Adam with a glare, '_Perfect_'. He placed a waypoint marker on a hunter for Kyle to see. A second later he got a green light and another waypoint from Kyle. Adam looked towards the conveyor belt and saw the object that was marked flying towards him, and he caught it with one hand. It was Kyle's magnum. Adam stared at it, puzzled, and tried to figure out why Kyle had given him his pistol.

>'It would be allot easier to concentrate without that noise' he thought to himself. The large dome of energy that covered the area originated from a generator at the very tip of the Spire. Every so often, it would send out a pulse of energy, creating a very loud whooshing noise, drowning out all other sounds.

>'God that noise really makes me want to blow the tower up.'

>*WHOOSH*

>At that moment, one of the elites fell dead, with the others not realizing it even happened. Adam raised an eyebrow.
'_What just happ-_'

>*WHOOSH*

>The other elite fell to the ground. This time Adam saw the faint vapor trail. Kyle was using that annoying noise to mask the sound of his sniper rifle. The hunters continued on their slow walk, and Adam realized what the pistol was for. Even if hunters cannot hear well, they will notice if its partner dies. Adam raised the Magnum and marked one of the hunters.
WHOOSH

>A blue light went off in Adam's helmet, and he squeezed the trigger. The bullet flew into the hunters exposed back, right in the center of the colony of Lekgolo. At the same time, Kyle's sniper round tore into the other hunters back. Both MgaLekgolo fell with deep thuds. Adam scanned the area to make sure no other guards were around while Kyle slid down one of the legs of the conveyor belt and caught up to him. Adam returned the pistol to Kyle, who holstered it.
"I'd say that went well." said Kyle.

>"Indeed." Adam replied, "Now to the back door.<p>

Inside the covenant bunker, several elites milled about. Some stood guard, some waited to go on patrol, and some monitored equipment. One elite sitting at a console had noticed that the communications arrays were not giving off their normal readings, so he had sent the Ranger to go check on them. Now things were getting ridiculous. The arrays were giving off no readings at all and the Ranger had not returned. The elite got stepped away from it's console and turned to a pair of ultra elites

>"You two!" it said in a commanding tone, "Report to the communications arrays and find out what s going on. The two Ultras nodded and headed towards the doors. The elite turned to go back to

his console, when it started. There was a loud BANG, and a gurgling yelp. All the elites in the building turned towards the doors. Two figures stood in the doorway, one purple, one gold. The two Ultra's lay dead on the floor, the figures weapons smoking at the barrels.
"DEMONS!" the elite roared. All elites in the room drew their weapons and trained them on the Spartans. The gold one pumped his weapon and a small plastic thing fell to the ground with a clatter.

>"Hey there." it said in a voice brimming with confidence, "Hope were not late to the party. But now that were all here..." at this point the purple one had been fiddling with the door controls, and the blast door closed locking them all in. The bunker had no other way out, was soundproof so no noise could get out, and the communications were knocked out, so they could not hail the Spire. The two Demons faced the building full of elites as the gold one finished.
"... Let the games begin."

"This seems like a good spot." said Adam, selecting a part of the wall. He put his assault rifle on the ground and crouched down to the wall.

>"Alright, but try to be quick." said Kyle. He stood with his rifle raised, keeping watch.
"This isn't something you'd want to rush." Adam countered, withdrawing a large tuning fork from his backpack. Kyle stared at the fork.

>"And the fork is for..?"
"I'm going to use an alpha charge to make our 'door', so

>I need to figure out what the natural frequency of this covenant alloy is." Adam explained while removing his helmet. He struck the wall with the tuning fork and brought it to his ear. After listening for a few seconds, he returned the fork to his pack and pulled out an alpha charge. 30 seconds later, the device was armed and ready. Adam picked up his rifle and helmet and stepped back, pressing the detonator. The purple metal crumpled, tearing a hole in the wall. He waved his hand from Kyle to the door.
"Grav-lift's this way. After you."

"Come on. Why are you taking so long?" complained Sam. Chazz's eye twitched while he pushed and twisted holograms on the console in from of him.

>"Do you want to do this?" he asked, agitation rising in his voice.
"Well--"

>"The correct answer is no." interrupted Chazz.
"Oh come on. How hard can it be? You shut the door to the bunker pretty easy." Sam argued. He was one of those people who would argue with anything for no reason.

>"That was because that door wasn't locked. All I had to do was hit the big 'close door' button." said Chazz, "This door is locked, and I don't know the password, so I'm hacking the door open, which takes time." Sam huffed.
"Well, how much longer?" he asked. Chazz pressed one more hologram and the door slid open.

>"Not much longer." he said with a grin, and Sam rolled his eyes beneath his helmet. Inside, the door was being monitored by a single Jackal, who screeched at the sight of the Spartans, and for that received a needle in the mouth. Chazz pointed down the hall.
"Come on. Grav-lift's this way."

At the top of the Spire, the data core rested on a pedestal. The commander of the Spire, an elite Field Marshall, stood gazing at it. With this they would learn more about the humans and how much they knew. So far, the Huragoks that had been working on cracking it and

translating the data had yet to withdraw anything of use, but they were getting there. It was only a matter of time. For some strange reason, the Field Marshal felt as if a grave threat was coming his way. He pushed the feeling aside. What could possibly reach him? He was guarded by his personal honor guard, two at either entrance, true elite warriors who would die before harm came to him. What's more, he was at the top of a 100 meter tall tower, tucked away into a cliff. If something was coming, he would know about it. And even if it did, he was the strongest Sangheili in this establishment. He gazed out a window up into the sky. Then he heard a noise. It was his guards at one entrance to this room. They gave startled growls and then roars. Small round objects fell at their feet.

>'Human grenades?' thought the Field Marshall. The grenades exploded, not hurting the elites but draining their Shields completely. Then a bang sounded and an elite was blown off his feet, his torso armor torn up. The others head jerked back and he fell to the ground. There was a bit of silence before two armored humans came around the corner, one gold and one purple.

>'How could this have happened?' thought the Field Marshall. He turned to the other two guards at the other entrance.

>"Assistance!" He yelled. The two elites turned to approach him. At that moment, two fuel rod rounds struck one guard in the back, effectively vaporizing him. The explosion drained the shields of the remaining guard, who spun back around and faced the hall. There was a *crack* and a metal slug tore through the elites head. Two other humans came around that corner, one red and one black. As the four advanced on him they took turns speaking.
"Your under arrest for theft and possession of stolen property." said the black one.

>"You have the right to remain silent." said the red one, "You have the right to an attorney-"
"-And if you don't have one, one will be provided for you." said the purple one.

>"If you do not comply, we can and will use force." finished the gold one. The Field Marshall's blood boiled in rage.
'_These humans are mocking me._' he thought. '_I shall not play their game._' With that, he went into his fighting stance, his sword glowing in his right hand. He faced the purple and gold Demons, and activated his hologram projector. A double of himself ran at those two while he ran at the other two. In the confusion, the two humans were momentarily distorted. The Elite vaulted over the red Spartan and reached the body of his guard. He muttered a quick prayer to his fallen brother, then picked up his sword, activating it in his left hand. Now with two swords, he turned back to face the demons.

>"RRRRRAAAAAAHHHHHH!" the elite roared, and charged.

"Well then..." said Kyle, observing the aftermath of the battle. Chazz's new needle rifle was tossed off the balcony on the Spire and he had gotten his wrist severely twisted, and Adam's assault rifle was cut cleanly in two. Sam had been kicked in the face and was now unconscious, and he himself had a slash across his breastplate, not deep enough to reach his flesh, but enough that it had given him a second degree burn. The elite field Marshal lay dead on the floor.

>"That was new." said Chazz finishing Kyle's statement. Adam prodded Sam's body with his foot.
"If that had been one on one, I'm not sure if any of use could have won."

>"Yeah." said Kyle, wincing as he breathed in, "The one who would've had the best chance was probably Sam, and look at him." Chazz flexed

his wrist.
"Okay, we overstayed our welcome boys. Adam grab the core, Kyle wake Sam up. I'm gonna call Jenny." the two Spartans blinked their acknowledgment lights and set off. Kyle walked up and knelt next to Sam, who was face down on the ground. Kyle hit the pressure release on Sam's helmet and pulled it off. The gold Spartan's blonde hair fell over his closed eyes. Kyle removed his own helmet and leaned in close to Sam's ear.

>"Hey Sam?" he whispered in his ear, "The cleaner messed up your sword design in your room." Kyle backed up and put his helmet back on. Sam's eyes snapped open and he bolted to his feet.
"WHERE IS THAT BASTARD!" he screamed, his grey eyes burning, "I'LL KILL HIM!" Kyle stood there with his arms folded across his chest.

>"Good to see no permanent damage to you." he said. Sam looked at Kyle, then around the room they were in. After about a second it clicked back into his head what was going on and what had happened. With that realization came a massive throb to his head. Sam doubled over, his head in his hands.
"Oohhh man," he said with a groan. "Did anyone get the license plate on the thing that hit me?" Kyle jerked a thumb over to where the elite lay.

>"Don't worry." he said matter-of-factly, "He got pulled over." Sam looked at the corpse, stared at it for a few seconds then he nodded. As went to retrieve his helmet and weapons, Adam and Chazz approached them, Adam holding the core in two hands, and Chazz typing on his TAC-PAD.
"Jenny's on her way, but dust off will be on the ground as to not raise so much suspicion." said Chazz, "So we'd better get moving."

>"Fine by me." said Adam, strain in his voice, "The sooner I can put this down the better. It's heavy." Sam returned, his helmet on and shotgun in hand.
"Any ideas on how to get down?" he asked, "Chazz and I couldn't find a way down on the way up." Adam glanced at Kyle, who shrugged and nodded.

>"We saw what might be a way down." he stated, " those yellow things circling the Spire are some kind of mini grav-lifts. I guess the idea is we jump off the balcony, hit one of the lifts, and it will land us safely." Chazz and Sam glanced at each other for a split instant, then they both nodded.
"Alright, let's go." said Chazz.

>"Wait, just a sec." said Sam, and walked over to where the elite field Marshall lay and looked around it.
"Where are these guys' swords?"

>Kyle yanked one off one of his thigh holsters and tossed it at Sam, who caught it.
"The other one and your first one fell off the balcony." Kyle informed the gold Spartan, "You're not going after it."

>"Oh I don't want to go after it." Sam returned while stowing the sword hilt in his pouch, "I only take one sword per mission."
"Alright, so let's go."

The four made their way to the balcony that pointed in the direction of the edge of the cliff. Chazz pointed down to a cluster of rocks. Beyond those was an old freighter pad left over from the mining facility. A pelican was currently waiting.

>"There's our ride. Let's not keep a lady waiting shall we?"
"Alright then, here goes nothing." said Adam, still carrying the core. He approached the edge gingerly, then jumped off. The other three watched as he plummeted through the sky. As he neared the bottom, Adam heaved the core into the approaching lift, then used his jet pack to safely touch down. The core fell into the lift, rose into the air, and fell to the ground. Adam walked over, picked up the core, and looked back up at the top of the Spire.

>"See?" he called back up at them, via comms, "Nothing to it." Back

at the top, Chazz looked down, a little nervous.
"I'm not sure. What if we miss the lift. There must be another way-"
>"Coming through!" yelled Sam, who ran and leaped off the balcony, diving head first.
"WHHHHOOOOOOO!" he yelled as he plummeted down. He hit the lift, rose up slightly, and hit the ground with his head.

>"OW." Sam stated, his voice sounding like his face was pressed against his visor. He picked himself up and looked back up the tower.
"See? Not so bad. Although I would recommend landing on your feet." Kyle and Chazz looked at each other. Then Kyle shrugged, and leaped off. Chazz gave an exasperated sigh, and jumped off himself. Once they were all down, they ran for the rocks, and came up to the loading pad. The pelican sat there, completely dark. Chazz came up to the rear hatch of the shark and rapped on the hull four times in quick succession. The hatch opened for the Spartans, and they saw Jenny standing at the entrance, her sidearm in her hand, just in case.
>"Hey boys." she said cheerfully, "How was the party?"
"Meh. It was kinda lame." said Sam.
>"Chazz and Sam started a bar fight, and they won." stayed Kyle.
"Sam had few to many, and passed out a little while later. Plus the host . Doubt he'll make it." said Chazz.
>"The best part was we made off with the keg." said Adam, placing the core down on the floor of the pelican. Jenny laughed at Zeta's summary of the mission.
"Well the night is still young." she said, "I say we all head back for some drinks." everyone seemed to think that was a good idea. They all took their seats and Jenny took off. The mission was a success, and went off without a hitch.

** (SOME TIME LATER) **

In the sub levels of the Spire, the Sangheili General Eaite' Randjamee stood before a holo-tank. The Demons had infiltrated the Spire almost perfectly. The one flaw in their plan was that they were unaware of the sensor abilities of this facility. The energy shield dome had many functions: to block distance artillery fire, to EMP any vehicle that attempted to assault them, and the ability to record everything that happened inside it. The ultimate security system. The reason why they were not discovered was the team of Unggoy tasked with monitoring the security spent their time asleep, and were properly executed for their failures. It was bad enough that the humans retrieved their artifact, but the Field Marshal Tuka' Notamee was killed.

>'These Demons shall pay dearly for what they have done.' thought Eaite' as he re-watched the battle between the commander and the humans.

>'At least he died a warriors death, a true honor.' He turned to face his three other generals; Quen' Quitonmee, Hona' Ingoremee, and Glew' Killamee.

>"My brothers, our situation is rather dire." said Eaite', his voice a low growl, "With this recent assault on our forces, the Demons have succeeded in crippling moral among the troops. This is mostly due to the death of our commander Tuka'."
"But now that he is gone, the four of us are in charge now." said Hona with a low chuckle. Glew' growled at Hona' for his disrespect, then addressed the rest of the group.

>"We must restore order and courage among the ranks." Then the ever quiet Quen' spoke up.
"To do this, we must cripple the humans forces in a truly remarkable way. The best target is making the Demons pay for their crimes." Eaite' flexed his mandibles in the

Sangheili equivalent of a cruel smile.

>'Oh yes, the Demons shall pay. And I know the perfect method.'

****Dun-Dun-Dun!** What will happen next? You'll have to wait for awhile, because ill be heading to the prairies for the holidays, away from the inter-webs. I realize that this chapter may have taken a while to be posted, but in my defense, this chapter is the longest on i have ever posted. you may have noticed that I did not include the fight scene between Zeta squad and Tuka' Notamee, the elite Field Marshall. This is because I had deemed it irrelevant to the story and writing and adding it would only serve to make this Chapter even more ridiculously longer than it already is. BUT, if enough people post a review saying they do want it (with the exception of JohnDoe040, because he reads all my stuff before I put it up), I will create a new story that will contain some deleted scenes from the story. If i do decide to do this, they will begin to go up after the main story is done. so it's really all up to you guys. One thing that I feel I should mention, now that this new DLC for Gears of War is out (or coming out soon, not to sure...not much of a gears player) there is a new (or old?) team in it called... Zeta squad. I would personally like to say that my story is in no way affiliated with Gears of War. My friends and I have called ourselves Zeta since Halo 3. Just want to say this so that there is no confusion. Well now that that's over and done with, I shall leave you to you own devices. I would like to wish everyone a happy holidays, and a big thanks to all my reviewers and subscribers (can I call them subscribers? they get updates when I post new stuff). See you guys in January, hopefully. This has been Shotgun assassin, signing off. ;)

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7. Chapter 4

he Untold Story Of Zeta Squad

****Happy 2012 to all! ;)****

Chapter 4: Payback

Zeta squad laid on their fronts, gazing over the edge of a cliff. A vast canyon was splayed out in front of them. Its green hue and lazy slopes would have made for an amazing view, but the Covenant ruined it. At the bottom of the canyon, the ground teemed with aliens and glowed with plasma weapons. It was the largest group of Covenant any of the four had ever seen. Thousands of grunts shambled about, some on foot, some riding ghosts. Hundreds of jackals stalked about, their energy shield gauntlets activated, but lowered at their sides. About ten hunters stood in pairs around the infantry, taller than everything. Brutes ran amongst the other forces, keeping them in line and growling at each other as well. Drones and banshees flew randomly in the sky around them. Behind the infantry was the artillery, six wraiths, each with an escort of one revenant and a ghost. All of them milled about, waiting.

Chazz whistled.

>"Wow." he exclaimed, "Now that, is a job. Even with your new toy Adam." Adam nodded. The black armored Spartan had been given a handheld targeting computer by Admiral Jesse, so that they could get a precise lock and fire a small volley of Archer missiles from The

Midnight Shadow.
"The problem is the fliers." said Adam, "There are so many, that I might lock on one of them, then the bombardment wouldn't hit enough guys to be worth it" Kyle and Sam were staring down at the mass of aliens, both deep in thought and unusually quiet. Chazz and Adam noticed this and turned to face them.
"Whats up?" asked Chazz. Kyle didn't turn his head.
"It just seems kinda weird to me." the maroon Spartan sounded distracted.

>"What's weird?" asked Adam. Kyle frowned under his helmet in confusion.
"How come there aren't any elites down there?" he pondered out loud. Chazz and Adam looked back into the canyon. Kyle was right. There were thousands of covenant, consisting of all combat species, except no elites.
"Dunno." said Chazz, "Maybe it's a brute legion?"
"I'm not sure." Kyle said, unconvinced, "I didn't think the brutes were allowed to command this much firepower. And even so, for the entire time they have been on this planet, the two races have been part of the same battalions." He shook his head.
"It's probably nothing. What's our back up again?" Adam glanced back down the ridge. Around a bend in the canyon was the human forces that had arrived to help them.
"Jenny, Stella, a couple falcons, and a platoon of about 50 ODST's. They have one of their own tanks and three warthogs. Pretty decent, but we would still need to take out a third of their forces for ours to stand a chance." Suddenly, Sam jerked his head up, then turned to the other three.
"I think I have our solution." He said, his voice giddy with excitement.
"Well, what is it?" asked Chazz. The other three couldn't see his face, but they knew the gold Spartan was grinning like a maniac.
"Adam, give your target locator to Kyle." Adam and Kyle both looked confused at this, but Adam retrieved the locator from his backpack and handed it to Kyle. Sam wasn't done yet.
"Adam, I'm gonna need about four packs of C4." Adam raised an eyebrow as he handed over the explosives.
"Care to explain why your making me give away all my gear?" he asked, a little annoyed. "What's next? I give Stella to the Covenant?" Sam turned to his maroon teammate.
"Hey Kyle, I'd say this falls under the category of a wide variety of situations, wouldn't you?" Kyle stared at Sam, puzzled.
"What are you talking about? A wide variety o-" he stopped mid-sentence. The others could almost hear something click in Kyle's mind. Then he laughed a bit.
"You sir, are delightfully insane. Yes it does seem like this is one of those varieties of situations." Sam put his first two fingers to his temple in the casual salute that he did.
"Alright, I'm gonna have a chat with those helljumpers." and he took off down the ridge.<p>

Sam turned a corner and came into a clearing at the entrance to the canyon. The entrance was narrow, and for the moment empty, but eventually it would be full of Covenant. Beyond the entrance, the noise of the alien forces was unnerving. In the clearing stood 50 men and women, all wearing ballistics body armor and full face helmets. Three warthogs stood at the front of the ODST's like cavalry, and two falcons stood in the back, their pilots standing beside their cockpits, prepared to jump in and take off on a moments notice. Sam approached the warthogs. A group of Helljumpers stood amongst them. Little was Sam aware, these were the soldiers that crossed Chazz on the wrestling ring, and they were still a little sore about it.

>"Oohhhhhh great." said the closest one, a beefy guy named Dallas, "Another one."
"Sup guys?" Sam asked, facing Dallas. Dallas' helmet polarized so that Sam could no longer see his face. The others followed suit. Sam raised an eyebrow behind his own helmet.

>"Ookaaayy then." he said out loud.
"What do you want Spartan?" asked another ODS'T, a slightly shorter one named Scott, "Gonna pull off some of your super-soldier bullshit and actually give us a chance at this fight" he asked, his voice full of sarcasm. Sam grinned. He wouldn't let a couple of helljumpers get inside his head.
"As a matter of fact, yes I am" he stated. The marines made gestures that made it look like they were rolling their eyes, but underneath it all, Sam could sense that they were all listening intently.
"Well, you gonna tell us what this 'Master Plan' is?" asked Scott. Sam tilted his head to the side, as if confused.

>"Were would the fun in that be?" he asked, "Even if I wanted to tell you, it's gonna be mostly improv. But I am gonna need one of these 'hogs." The ODS'T's glanced at each other.
"No." said Dallas and Scott at the same time. Sam wasn't finished.

>"Oh come on. Why"
"Are we gonna get it back?" asked Dallas. Sam paused.

>"No." he answered.
"Then you shouldn't need an explanation." Scott stated.

>"Come on." insisted Sam This could be our only chance to even the playing field. If I don't do this you guys might not make it."
"We'll take our chances." said Dallas. With that, the Helljumpers turned away, leaving Sam standing there. He stared at the group, both angry at their insolence and impressed at their guts. They were ready to stand up to impossible odds. Even better, they stood up to him. Even so, he still needed the jeep. Closer to the back of the platoon stood the marines tank. Beside it stood Stella and Jenny, who was leaning on her pelican. She spotted him and waved. He waved back and walked over to her.

>"Hey Sam." she said cheerfully. How's it look up there?" she asked, gesturing towards the clifftop. Sam fidgeted a bit.
"It's okay-I-well I guess it could be better-I mean-well it's likeâ€¦could-could you please stand on the other side of me?" he stuttered. Jenny rolled her eyes and walked around to the other side of Sam so that he didn't have to look at the pelican and its shark design.

>"Better now?" she asked sarcastically. Sam breathed a sigh of relief.
"Thanks for that." he said. She grinned.

>"Now what's going on?" Sam told her about just what they were up against. He also mentioned he had a plan, and it required one of the ODS'T's warthogs, and that the helljumpers were being hard to work with. Jenny listened to the story and looked over at the marines in question.
"let me see if I can do something about this. I can be pretty persuasive." and she took off. Sam stood there for a bit, striking up a bit of a conversation with Stella the tank, before Jenny returned, jiggling a set of keys in one hand. She tossed them to Sam, who caught them in one hand.

>"How in the hell did you-"
"Like I said," she said "I can be quite persuasive."

>"What did you say to them?" Sam asked slyly, "Make some promises that-" she smacked in the head, causing it to rattle about inside his helmet.
"Ow" he said. Jenny's glare was so intense, her eyes burned through both of their visors and turned Sam's spine to water, which no one had ever done before.

>"Get your mind out of the gutter." she hissed. Sam stepped back a

few steps.
"Okay, now I see your persuasive abilities." he said with a half grin. She smiled at the remark.
>"Alright then," Sam stated, "time to go even the playing field. Stella? I'm gonna need you for just a second".<p>

Kyle returned to looking into the canyon. Chazz and Adam were still staring down at Sam until he disappeared around a bend, then they turned to Kyle.

>"What just happened?" the two asked. Kyle adjusted the built-in scope on the target locator.
"We are gonna get a signal, then all of us are gonna attack, marines included." Adam was still unsure of what was going on.

>"What kind of signal? The ODS'T's don't have our status light setup."
"You'll know the signal when you see it." said Kyle. Chazz wasn't yet convinced.

>"We still need to seriously thin out the enemies in order to stand a chance." Kyle grinned.
"Tell me something you two. What do you think of Sam?" the black and purple Spartans looked at each other.

>"A killer?" said Adam.
"A fighter?" said Chazz.

>"Daring?" said Adam.
"Crazy?" said Chazz. Kyle held up a hand.

>"Those are all correct, but 'crazy' is the best one. Now second question: Do either of you have any idea just how crazy he is?" The two Spartans looked at each other again.
"Well, we have been on the same team for what almost three months." said Adam, "He has done some pretty stupid stuff in that time." Kyle chuckled.

>"That's just 'normal' him. He is capable of so much more. Now that he has the opportunity, he's setting up something that people like Jesse up there," he pointed a finger to the sky, "would call 'bat shit insane'." Chazz felt his whole body tense, something that rarely happened.
"This is something that you have seen before?" he asked Kyle, his voice containing a little unease.

>"Once," replied Kyle, "during training. Although judging by what he has so far set up, it will be on a whole other scale than what I saw."
"But what exactly is he gonna do?" asked Adam. Kyle smiled and pointed into the canyon.

>"Turn the tables."<p>

At the bottom of the canyon, a lone warthog came into view, speeding towards the sea of aliens. From their vantage point and with magnified helmet view, Zeta squad could see the gold figure in the drivers seat.

>"What the hell is he doing!" Adam yelled.
"Commencing his plan." Kyle stated. The Covenant Forces stopped milling about and all faced the lone vehicle. Then the front lines began to fire, balls of blue and green light and long pink tracers filled the air. The plasma mostly missed their mark, and the needles did little damage, but as the warthog closed the distance the shots became more accurate.

>"He's gonna get himself killed!" yelled Chazz.
"He's fine." Kyle assured, bringing the target locator up to a firing position and squeezing the trigger. A fine green laser light emitted from the locator in order to properly lock on to its target. Adam suddenly became nervous .

>"Hey, be careful with that Kyle, you've got that thing trained on-" The green light disappeared, and in the Spartans helmets, a huge red ring appeared to display the area of effect the bombardment would have around the target-which was selected to be Sams warthog.
"What the hell are you doing!" yelled Adam. Kyle put his

hand up again.

>"One, no yelling please. Two, this was his idea. Three, I wouldn't move yet until the signal goes." in the canyon, the warthog entered the cloud of covenant fliers. Then the three spartans received a ping on their comms. It was from the weapons detail on the Midnight shadow.
"Zeta squad, this is the Midnight Shadow. We are getting a signal for our Archer missile system and have locked on target. Please confirm?" Adam opened his mouth to reply, but Kyle got to it first.

>"We hear you Midnight Shadow. Arm Archer missiles Al through **A7** and fire on my mark. Confirm?"

>"Copy that Zeta-2, safeties removed on missiles Al through** A7**, ready for firing on your mark."

Sam sped through the canyon, plasma fire all around him. His mind suddenly exploded with thoughts. Ideas, plans, insults, the odd doubt. Sam took a breath, collected his thoughts and through them out the window. His instincts took over his movements and his insanity took over his thoughts. A needle shattered the windshield and he ducked to avoid being hit by another. As he neared the large mass of enemies, the jackals were pushed to the front lines and they overlapped their gauntlet shields. Up closer were the haze of drones waiting for him. In a few seconds he'd be in the thick of it.

>'Alright Kyle,' he thought to himself '_now or never._' just as he was coming up on the cloud a large red ring appeared, with him at the center. As he drove, the ring followed him.

>'Great. Now all I need is to-' His thought was interrupted by a drone landing on his hood. It raised a plasma pistol at Sam's face. Sam grabbed it, yanked the the drone towards it, and punched it in the face, cracking the insects endoskeleton. He tossed the drone out of the warthog just as more swarmed him. Sam dropped a few with his SMG, then realized he reached the infantry. The jackals still stood in his way, so Sam needed his fallback.

>"Stella Now!" he yelled.
"Roger that Sam" said Stella as she fired her cannon from the end of the canyon. The slug flew past Sam and hit the clump of jackals in front of him. The vulture looking aliens flew everywhere, leaving a gap in the line. Sam pushed the warthog passed its maximum speed, and connected with the infantry. Grunts and jackals disappeared under the grill, brutes hit the front and bounced off.

>'Okay.â€|NOW!' he thought to himself. He leaped out of the jeep and the warthog continued on, leaving a trail of bodies behind it. The red ring on his HUD followed the hog.

>'Ok,' thought Sam '_just keep going a bit more and-_' The warthog finally found its match, a pair of hunters. The wrecked jeep struck the hunters shield, flipped over and stopped dead.

>"Uh oh." Sam said out loud,
'_I was hoping that would go a bit farther_.' He was still within the 'red ring of death'.

>'Oh well.' he withdrew a detonator from his thigh pouch. On both sides of the warthog were two flashing red lights. He pressed the button and the C4 detonated. The explosion engulfed the two hunters and everything in a 15 yard radius. Until now the covenant had been staring at the jeep, but now that there was no jeep, they all faced the bright gold figure standing amongst them.

Then it started. A large boom sounded in the heavens, and Sam knew what was coming next.

>'This could prove to be a problem.' he thought. He was closer to the edge of the ring than the center, but he'd never get

out fast enough. He only had one option: His armor lock.

>"let's see how 'invincible' this thing really makes me, shall we?" he addressed the covenant around him. He slammed his fist into the ground, and the electric blue energy surrounded him. Then an Archer missile flew down from the sky and struck the ground right in the middle of the ring. The explosion vaporized hundreds of aliens and scarred the earth. Sam felt his skull rattle. The armor lock always ensured he was untouchable, and the missile still made his whole body shake. But it held. Then five more Archers struck the ground in different spots, one after the other. Each one made Sam feel he was being punched all over by a pack of brutes. After the sixth missile detonated, his armor lock finally ran out of power and canceled. Sam stood up shakily.
'_Ow that hurts._' he thought to himself, 'but at least it works.' he looked up to the sky | and saw the seventh and final missile falling towards him.

>"Oh son of a-" The missile struck the ground on the opposite side of the ring. Sam's shields managed to absorb the bit of explosion that reached him, but the shockwave sent him flying.
He yelled as he flew through the air, his body flailing uncontrollably.

>*OOMPF*

>His body struck something. The thing grabbed him around the arms. Sam looked up. It was Adam. They were floating in the air, thanks to Adam's jet pack.
"That's one hell of a signal." said Adam.

>"Thanks." said Sam, his voice a tad weaker than normal, "I don't think I'll be doing that again anytime soon." Adam grinned.
"I agree. But you can't call it quits just yet." He jerked his head in the direction on the canyon, and Sam looked. The canyon was now a war zone. The humans had entered the canyon and were now charging the now much smaller covenant armada. The aliens had shaken off their fear and shock and charged the humans. The sky was now cleared of drones, and banshees engaged falcons and Jenny's pelican. Amongst all the black armored ODS'T's, a brief flash of purple appeared. Sam could also see Kyle's position waypoint on his HUD. He was on an outcropping halfway up the canyon wall, using rocks and his invisibility, as cover. Sam also saw Stella hanging back, waiting for Adam.

>"Yeah." said Sam, "It's not over yet."<p>

 |

Chazz stood on a small hill looking over the canyon. The fight was waning, and the humans were winning. Sam had apparently done more than thin their ranks. The covenant were behaving erratically. It seemed like they hadn't been able to pull themselves together after the missile strike, and remained too scared to fight properly.

>'It's the fact that there are no elites to keep order.' thought Chazz, '_This could give us an advantage against brute legions._' What's more than that, Sam's actions seemed to have spurred the ODS'T fighting spirits. The helljumpers had fought with outstanding performance and little casualties.

Across the canyon, Chazz could see a bunch of grunts scurrying up a slope. The slope had been subjected to rockslides in the past, and the grunts weaved between boulders. Chazz looked back around. The helljumpers were mopping up the rest of the covenant. A little farther off he could see Sam taking on a brute chieftain and some captains. Chazz shrugged and ran after the grunts. As he reached the

slope he could see that the grunts had escaped up the slope were the rocks were bunched closer together. He crept up the slope after them.

It wasn't long before he reached the top of the slope. The land leveled out into a clearing with a view of the entire canyon, and yet the rocks obscured the view of the people in the canyon from seeing up at the clearing. Immediately, Chazz knew something was wrong.

>'Where did all those grunts go?' Then that voice appeared in his head again.
>'Look behind you!_' Chazz spun around and came face to face with an elite general.

Eaite' Randjamee swung a fist at the purple Demon. It caught his fist and countered with his own punch. Eaite' caught the punch with his free hand, and the human and Sanghelli began trying to overpower the other. As much as the general would love to demonstrate his utter superiority to the demon, but he had other plans. He looked over to the the shadow of a boulder, where Quen' Quitonmee stood, hidden from view. The two generals nodded at each other. Before the human even realized what was happening, Eaite' brought his right leg up and drove his knee into its torso. Its legs buckled and the strength in its arms waned, and the Sanghelli seized the chance. He pushed the the demon to its knees and broke both of its arms at the shoulder.

Chazz screamed in pain, causing more pain to flare in his chest. He guessed he had a few cracked or broken ribs, but that was nothing compared to his arms He had broken his fingers before, but never his whole arm, let alone both arms at the same time. The pain was excruciating, and it began to cloud his vision. The elite grabbed him by the back of the neck and dragged him to the edge of the clearing. From here Chazz could see all of his teammates. Kyle, perched up on his outcropping. Sam, killing off the last of the brutes he was fighting. Adam, driving his tank and laying waste to everything in his way. None of them knew what was happening. Chazz now realized why there were no elites on this invasion unit. It was a setup to draw Zeta squad out in the open.

>'I've got to warn them.' thought Chazz. The elite grabbed the rim of his helmet and forcibly tore it off. It lay discarded beside him, within arms reach, if only his arms worked. The elite activated his wrist blade and held it at Chazz's neck.
>"You will watch what happens next." it growled in his ear. From the corner of his vision, Chazz could see a second elite general emerge from the shadows. It leveled a focus rifle and aimed it at Kyle.<p>

'_Wait a second._' thought Kyle as he scanned the canyon with his rifle, '_Were did Chazz go?_' His waypoint was gone. He tried pinging him on comms.

>"Hey Chazz, we're did you diss-" There was no warning. A yellow beam of energy struck him in the right side of the face. In an instant in overloaded his shields and boiled away his helmet. Kyle screamed as the beam burned his flesh, as his vision in his right eye disappeared. Just when he thought it wouldn't stop, it did. He fell to the ground, his remaining vision going black.<p>

BOOM!

>Sam's shotgun smoked as the last brute fell. As he was reloading his

gun, he heard Kyle trying to raise Chazz on the comms.
"Hey Chazz, where did you diss-" the line erupted into static. Sam turned to Kyle's position to see him being brought down by a focus rifle.

>"Adam!" Sam yelled into the comms, "Kyle got hit. I'm gonna go help him." and he took off. He took no more than two steps when something grabbed his arm. He looked over his shoulder and saw an elite general materializing behind him. Hona' Ingoremee activated his red energy sword and brought it up in a wide arc, slicing Sam's right arm off. Sam screamed in pain and fell to the ground. His helmet rolled off his head. The sword swipe must have hit the seal on his neck. He raised his head and was face to face with his helmet. The red visor was cracked, making the smile look like a sympathetic frown. The last things he saw before blacking out was Hona', his sword casting an evil red gloom over him, as he stomped his helmet, crushing it.<p>

Stella and Adam fired their weapons respectively, and the last wraith was engulfed in a fiery explosion.

>"Good job Stella." said the Spartan.
"Thank you Adam." replied the Tank.

>"Adam!" came a panicked yell from the comms. It was Sam.
"Kyle got hit. I'm gonna go help him." Adam turned to Sam's marker. The gold Spartan began running and was attacked from behind by some elite.

>"Sam!" Adam yelled. "Stella, I'm going to go help him. He took off, sprinting as fast as he could.
'_Please don't be dead._' he thought to himself. He saw the elite stamp on Sam's helmet and disappear.

>"Adam! Behind you!" came Stella's automated voice sounding almost panicked. Adam jumped into the air, spun around, and triggered his jet pack so that he was still accelerating towards Sam. Close on his tail was a banshee, one that had survived the fight. It was accelerating towards him at full speed, intending to ram him. It was too close for him to bring his rockets up in time. Stella fired her gun at the banshee, blowing up. Adam's shields absorbed the small bits of debris striking him. As the smoke from the explosion cleared, he could see his faithful tank and the elite general right behind her.

Glew' Killamee smiled when the black armored demon caught sight.

>"That's right." he thought to himself. '_You will watch helplessly as I do this._' he hefted a large plasma launcher. In three seconds, he charged it and fired four super powered plasma grenades right on the back grate of the human tank. The machine gave a strange wailing noise, the grenades detonated, the chain reaction caused the large rotating gun on the top of it to blow right off. A fire erupted in the cockpit and from where the grate used to be. the tank would never make another sound. Glew' turned his attention back at the demon, who was screaming in despair for his vehicle. Glew' pulled a needle rifle of his back and fired a few shots at him, deliberately missing. The human turned his back to him, trying to save his friend. Glew' smiled cruelly again and fired another needle, this one hitting the demon's jet pack. The needle detonated and the jet pack lost control, sending the human flying into the canyon wall, head first. The jet pack exploded while still on the human's back, and the demon fell limply to the ground.

From the top of the slope, Chazz screwed his eyes shut. He had just

witnessed something he thought was impossible. He could even hear the screams of Sam and Adam from his helmet lying beside him.

>'No No No No No!*' he screamed inside his head, '_That didn't just happen. Their not-_'
>"We allowed you and your friends to live." said the elite standing over him.
"You are the great defenders of this planet. You saw to break our resolve, our spirits. Now we have broken yours." Chazz felt the energy wrist blade being removed from behind his neck.
>"If you four are truly warriors, harbor your hatred for us. Retaliate. Fight back. The next time we see each other will certainly be the last." Chazz Felt something hit him in the back of the neck, and his world went black.<p>

**Curious about Hona's sword? read the story Headhunters from the book Halo Evolutions. **

8. PSA

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

PSA

*In the middle of a dull boxed canyon stood two soldiers, one cobalt and one cyan.*
>First one: "Hi there. I'm Private Leonard Church from the popular web series Red Vs Blue."
>Second one: "And I'm Private Lavernius Tucker from the same show. And today we're here to talk to you about-"
>*A very fish like pelican crashes on top of them. Jenny steps out the back.*
>Jenny: "What the hell are you guys doing? You can't be here. Shotgun assassin doesn't own Red Vs Blue."
>*Turns to look at the reader.*
>Jenny: "Hey everyone. This is just a short update to inform you about what is happening now. Please go easy on Shotgun for now. He is preoccupied with exams at the moment, leaving little time to write, but he will try as best he can to keep with the story. On the subject of Red Vs Blueâ€¦!"
>*Looks down at her pelican to see a twitching cyan arm sticking out from the bottom.*
>Tucker(muffled): "Ow you bitch, what the hell was that for!"
>Jenny: "Bite me, asshole. I will land on whoever I want,"
>Tucker: "Bow Chicka Bow-"
>*Jenny stamps on Tucker's fingers.*

>Tucker: "OW!"
>*Jenny turns back to readers*
>Jenny: "Anyway, I'm here to say that Shotgun is now a (more or less) active member of the Rooster Teeth site, under the name Chidorsengan. Wanna see pictures of Zeta Squad? They will be up there. For those of you who have anything to discuss with him, such as questions about his fics or ideas for new ones or anything in general feel free to leave a comment on his profile and he will get back to you A.S.A.P. Don't have a Rooster Teeth account, go get one, they are the best thing on the Internet. For those of you who really don't want to use that site, feel free to use this sites PM service."

>*A radio transmission sounds from inside the pelican.*

>Radio: "Pelican Juliet-Seven-Two-Niner, report. Where did you disappear to?"

>Jenny: "Oops. Gotta go. A new chapter will come out eventually, so in the mean time, be sure to check out Rooster Teeth and Red Vs Blue. See ya."

**Please don't hate me for this. ;) **

9. Chapter 5

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

**Sorry about the wait. **

Chapter 5: Nightmares

"I don't care for the full report, Lieutenant, I just want to know what the hell happened to them." said Admiral Jesse, trying to keep his voice neutral. In front of him, the young pilot displayed a few emotions in her face. Worry, anger, but no fear.

>"Sorry Sir." Jenny replied crisply. She then went on to explain that the battle was almost won, and the next thing she saw was Adam's tank explode. Jenny flew low to see if they were all right, only to see Adam sprawled on the ground, his helmet fractured and his back armor blown off. Seeing him like that with none of the others helping him, Jenny could tell that something had happened to all four of them. At that she instructed all the forces in the area to cease their actions and search for them. It didn't take long to find them all. The four were brought aboard her pelican and she returned to the Midnight Shadow as fast as she could. Jesse listened intently and waited for Jenny to finish before he started talking again.
"How did no one notice this sooner?" he asked.

>"No one really kept track of them Sir, they were all over the place." Jenny responded, "They were also on a separate comms channel from the rest of us." Jesse paused. Then he gave a large sigh and relaxed his arms, which were clamped tightly behind his back.
"What the hell could have done this to them?"

>"I don't know, Sir. They could tell us, but they're..." Jenny's violet eyes flickered with worry, "They're all still unconscious, Sir." Jesse stared out the Shadow's view deck, down at the planet below, knowing that there was still something out there that had the upper hand on them.
"I suppose the better question..." he said to no one in particular, "Is why did they leave them alive?"

Jenny walked silently through the halls, not really paying attention to anything. The Spartans were her best friends, and seeing them out cold, laying on the deck of her pelican like broken playthings had shaken her. She was lucky that they were found so soon because, well it was obvious, some of them might not have made it. Although that was still a bit of an overstatement. The Spartans were still unconscious with extreme injuries, and it was unsure to her exactly how bad it was. Thinking about it made her worry, and she was thinking about it so much that she bumped into someone without realizing where they came from.

>"Sorry. I-" she began. Then she saw who it was. It was Scott, the ODS, with Dallas beside him.
"It's okay." said Scott, his voice

sympathetic. Everyone knew about what had happened to Zeta, and it was a massive hit to the marines' moral. Scott seemed to know that it affected Jenny more than anyone, and calmly walked on, Dallas following him. Jenny walked on for a little more, then heard a voice behind her.

>"Hey." She turned around. Scott and Dallas had stopped and were looking back at her.
"When the Spartans come to... tell them we said thanks." said Scott.

>"Sorry too." added Dallas. Jenny managed to half smile back at them, then they turned their separate ways.<p>

The med bay was the busiest Jenny had ever seen it, which was not a good sign. Doctors and nurses moved all around, some carrying medicine, some pushing carts, some typing on data pads. Jenny approached one of the senior medical officers, a ginger man named Doctor Kennedy, who was giving orders to other personnel.

>"Hey Doc." she said, making him jump a bit and turn to face her, analyzing her face through a pair of thick glasses.
"Ahh, hello again Lieutenant." he said, his British accent thick.

>"How can I be of service? I hope you don't have more half-dead patients for me." Jenny's eyes widened a bit.
"No, nothing like that. I just want to know how they're doing." Kennedy turned back to his data pad and pulled up the diagnostics on Zeta squad.

>"To be honest it's all up in the air right now. Spartan 01-"

"Don't call them by there numbers." Jenny interjected, almost fiercely, startling the Doctor, causing him to drop the pad "They are human beings." Kennedy picked up the data pad and pushed his glasses farther up his nose.

>"Very well. Sorry. Um- Chazz has five broken ribs and a crack on the top of his spine. The ribs can be easily repaired, but the neck is going to need to be fused back together. He is currently in surgery, undergoing that. The biggest problem is his arms. Both have been snapped just bellow the shoulder. We are going to have use a new bio-mechanics system to repair them. That will take time and a considerable amount of pain on his part, but there is no other option. Adam has third degree burns across his back as well as bits of his armor stuck in his back and vertebra. We will need to inject a bone substitute directly into his spine, which could be rejected by his body or by his augments. He is also hemorrhaging from a blood vessel in his head from being tossed into a cliff wall. He is currently in surgery to stop the blood from reaching his brain. Those two are also the better two." he cleared his throat and continued on. "Kyle has intense third degree plasma burns completely covering the right side of his face, and he has lost his right eye. His helmet had melted to his face, and when we removed it, it tore off a large chunk of his skin. His skull has multiple fractures in it from it expanding rapidly due to heat, as well as a hole burned through. He is also in the operating room getting his skull and face mended, although he will never be the same, and we can't mend his eye. Sam... well to point out the obvious, has lost his entire right arm. The flesh was seared shut with the plasma energy from the sword that cut him, so he didn't bleed out. He also received a cut to the back of his neck that nearly hit his spine. What we have to do is cut the burned arm flesh right back to the shoulder and reach the nerve strands. From there we can graft a biotic arm to his body, in theory." he lowered the data pad and looked back at Jenny with tired eyes.
"The thing is... these kinds of operations are still only experimental and incredibly dangerous. The robotic arm surgery has only succeeded once, ironically it was on another Spartan. Normal humans couldn't survive. Even though their Spartans, they're gonna need a bloody miracle to

survive." Jenny looked past Kennedy towards the doors to the operating rooms.

>"Well then, let's hope their luck hasn't run out yet, Doc."<p>

Blackness. That's all there was. Nothing but the blackness. Chazz stood there, in the dark, and stared at his arms. They were working again. What had mended them? He looked around again. Was this the after life? The elite had said that he would leave him alive. In the darkness shapes began to form. They approached him, all smiling. It was his team: Kyle walking lazily forward, Sam giving his two finger salute, and Adam sitting atop his tank.

>"There you are" said Kyle when they finally reached him.

>"C'mon, we still have work to do." said Sam, unslinging his shotgun. Adam stood up on Stella.

>"There's one more fight ahead of us." Chazz stared at them all. He was about to speak when _something else came into existence. The head of that elite general appeared, towering above them all, and moving towards his team. Chazz tried to yell, to warn them, but no sound escaped his throat. He tried to point at it, but his arms hung limp at his sides again. His boots became so heavy, he couldn't move. The massive elite head spread his mandibles wide and let out a blood-curdling roar. The black world began to shake. Flames erupted around Kyle, who fell to the ground screaming. A disembodied energy sword stabbed Sam in the shoulder, and he was dragged into the blackness without a sound. Stella exploded, and Adam was tossed into the air, and never came down again. Chazz screamed to them, but again no sound came. The elite opened his jaws wide again and flew towards him engulfing him in an even deeper darkness..._

And his eyes snapped open. Chazz gasped, his body covered in sweat and out of breath. He lay on some sort of cot, his breathing sharp and ragged. It took a moment to realize his armor was no longer on his body. He sat up and lifted his hands to his face and wiped some of the sweat from his face. His hands. He looked down at his arms. They were his arms, and they were working. He flexed them and made small circular movements with them, as if he was learning to use a new piece of equipment. As he did this, pain began to flare in his shoulders. Chazz relaxed his arms, as to not cause any damage to them. Upon further inspection, he noticed two large scars, both directly beneath his shoulder sockets. Someone must have mended them. Chazz looked away from his arms and looked around the room. In an instant, he knew he was in the medical ward of The Midnight Shadow. 'he was in one of the ward's recovery rooms. Farther down the room was a man with light orange hair and thick glasses. It was the chief of the medical staff, doctor Kennedy. He sat in a chair, legs crossed, reading a book. It seems he could feel eyes on him, because he looked up to see Chazz looking at him.

>"Ahh, welcome back to the land of the living, Lieutenant." he said, closing his book and clapping his hands together, "Gave us quite a scare there, but you'll be fine as long as you take it easy for awhile." Chazz tried to get out of his cot, but pain flared in his arms, chest and neck, causing him to flop back down. Kennedy rolled eyes a bit and threw his arms up dramatically.
"Oh yes, let's not listen to the man who pulled you back from the dead. Let's all just jump back into action without even knowing what exactly your condition is. Bloody military. They have no respect for their bodies." he walked up to Chazz's cot and looked the Spartan in the eye.

>"Look, I understand that you want to get back out there, but in no shape to. Simple as that. Your ribs and neck are still setting, and your arms are still growing used to your biotic shoulders." Chazz stopped fidgeting and looked back at the doctor, the look on his face somewhere between puzzlement and shock.
"See? You haven't even got a clue about yourself right now. You need time to recover." A pager at his hip buzzed. He removed it from his belt, read it and replaced it.

>"Now your going to stay there or you will be of no use to anyone. I have to go now... One of your friends just woke up."<p>

The sun was warm, the air cool. All around him stalks of wheat rippled in the breeze. Kyle lay back and placed his hands behind his back, a stalk of long grass between his teeth. He felt as if he could sit in this field for the rest of his life. As a Spartan, he could never remember what peace was like. In the back of his mind, he felt there was something he was forgetting, but he payed it no attention. For now he simply enjoyed the peace. He closed his eyes, listening to the sound of nearby bees and their soft buzzing...

>Buzzing...

>Buzzing...

>Buzzing...

>The noise began changing from tranquil bees to angry hornets. Kyle frowned at the sound. The buzzing was so fierce now that it sounded like roaring flames. Kyle opened his eyes, and saw the field was on fire. The piece of grass in his mouth incinerated, and mounds of burning wheat began to fall, engulfing him. He yelled to someone, anyone. He was now buried in flaming grain, his vision in his right eye black, his left eye red. The fire burned Kyle's face, and consumed all the oxygen around him. Kyle began to suffocateâ€|

Air filled his lungs. Kyle gasped, gulping air like a landed fish. His vision came into focus, and he looked around. He was laying on a hospital bed, an IV in his arm. He yanked it out, feeling a little dizzy afterwards. He proceeded to survey his surroundings, and then noticed something was wrong. His vision was still not the way it should be. He covered his left eye with his hand. All was dark. He couldn't see out of his right eye. He touched the skin around it. The flesh was rough and painful to touch.

>'What the hell happened?' he asked himself. Then it began to come back to him: The covenant armada, how there was no elites, Sam's signal, the to easy fight, Chazz disappearing, then the unimaginable pain on his face. A bell gave a little chime, pulling him back to the present. The door to his room opened, and a man with orange hair and glasses walked in, typing on a data pad.

>"Praise whatever saints that may or may not exist." the man said, "Your alive. Got to admit, you gave most of us a scare, Lieutenant. I don't believe we have ever met. I am doctor Kennedy, chief medical officer on board The Midnight Shadow. Congratulations, your the second Spartan to cheat death. We can only hope that the other two can as well." Kyle stared at the man, feeling devastated that the other Spartans got hit to, but relieved that at least one was okay.
"Thanks Doc." he said his voice a little hoarse, "Heyâ€| just how bad was I?" Kennedy stopped typing, and looked up at Kyle. Then he placed the pad down on a table and removed his glasses. He rubbed his eyes, then picked up a hand mirror from the table.

>"I think it would be best if you saw that for yourself." he said, handing the mirror to Kyle. The Spartan looked into the mirror, and

went very still. The whole right side of his face was terribly scared. The tissue damaged and blotchy, with a chunk missing from his cheekbone. He could see that the way his eyelid was shut, unable to be opened, and covered in scars meant the eye was gone. On top of his head, his jet-black hair was gone. The right side burned off, the left side shaved. Even the orange streak in the middle that he was so proud of. He knew somewhere in the back of his mind that it would all grow back, but all of his logical thinking was being repressed by sheer rage.
>"You were right Doc." he said through clenched teeth, "It was a better idea for me to see this for myself." The mirror in his hand was shaking uncontrollably, and Kyle smashed it into pieces.

Sam couldn't move. He was on his knees in a black world. Nothing existed but him and whatever he was standing on. His legs were still and could not move, his arms hanging limply at his sides.

>'Well this is just great.' he thought to himself, 'I have better thing to do than sit in whatever limbo this is.' Then a light appeared in front of him. A sickly crimson light, the color of blood. The light grew till it took the form of a three foot long double-pronged blade. An elite stepped out of the darkness, the sword in its hand. It stood before Sam, staring maliciously at him, as if he were a piece of meat. Sam glared back at it, then he saw movement the the left of it. A far ways back, he could see Kyle, his sniper rifle trained on the elites head. The elite laughed, and a focus rifle beam emerged from the blackness, striking Kyle, who fell over and disappeared.

>"NO!" screamed Sam, desperately trying to move. The elite slowly walked forward. It reached out and grabbed Sam's right arm and raised it to be level with the ground. With its other hand, it raised the sword high, and brought it down on the arm, severing it right below the shoulder. Sam began to scream, and then stopped. There was no pain. Why was there no pain? He looked down at the little stump of what was left of his arm. Seeing that and his arm dangling in the elites hand made him sick. The elite gave a cruel chuckle and threw the arm behind him. A pack of brutes emerged from the shadows and pounced on the severed arm tearing it into shreds... and then eating it. Sam could do nothing but sit and watch in absolute horror. The elite obscured his vision once more. It laughed in relish over its victory. In the background, Sam thought he saw three more elites. Then the one in front of him raised its sword again, and thrust it into the Spartans visorâ€|

Sam felt himself come back into consciousness. His years of training kept him from opening his eyes or changing his breathing pattern when he woke up. Last he checked, he was on a battlefield, beating the hell out of a bunch of brutes, but he could tell there was something he was forgetting. He also had an odd feeling that whatever he had been dreaming about was important, but dreams left his mind the second he woke up ever since he went through the Spartan augmentation process.

>'Okay, time to stop thinking and start doing.' he said to himself inside his head. Eyes still closed, he began to figure out his situation. First thing he realized was that he was no longer in his armor, but in some very uncomfortable garments that he couldn't identify. That was a pretty bad first sign. He proceeded to discover that he was lying on some surface that felt like a cross between a steel table and a bed. He also had a thin sheet covering his body up to his shoulders.

>'A military ship bed it was then.' he thought, slightly relieved. He still did not open his eyes. He felt relatively fine, although his neck was really stiff, and his right arm felt numb. Judging by the feel of the air around him he was a small room, but bigger than his quarters or the brig. He could also sense no other presence in the room.

>'Well I guess the coast is clear for now.' he thought. He brought his right arm up to his face and rubbed his eyes with his thumb and forefinger.

>'Wait a minute,' he stopped, his hand hovering over his still closed eyes, '_Why does my hand feel so cold? And how is it so smooth?_' He moved his hand a foot away from his face, and opened his eyes. A metal hand looked back at him, the mechanical fingers slacked. An arm was attached to the hand, steel bones and artificial muscle encased in metal. Something clicked in his head, and Sam remembered the end of the battle. Kyle being shot, then the elite, slicing his arm off, and destroying his helmet. He sat alone in some hospital room, staring at the thing on his arm. He lifted and lowered it like he would his normal arm, and flexed his fingers.

>'Alright, you split-jawed, hinge-head bastard,' he thought, the voice in his head spitting with rage. His new fingers were clenching into a fist, shaking uncontrollably.

>'now you've made this personal.' he raised the mechanical arm| and drove it through the wall.

"Huh?" he was floating. At least it felt as if he was floating. He was in someplace dark. Adam looked around, he figured, he couldn't feel his neck, and wherever he was, he couldn't tell if he was actually turning his head. He tried to move something, anything. Nothing happened.

>'Okay. I'm in a place that is only black and have no body. I must be dreaming.'

>"Adam." came a voice. A toneless, female voice. Out from the shadows emerged Stella, her gun barrel pointed at him as if it was looking at him.

>"Stella!" Adam cried out. The tank continued looking at him.

>"Adam, why?" she asked.

>"Why what?" he asked back. A blue light emerged from the back of the tank.

>"Why didn't you save me?" The tank exploded in a fiery blaze.

>"NOOO!" screamed Adam. Another figure emerged from the darkness. It was Damien, his old armorer friend from basic. Damien walked up to him, his face full of sorrow and anger.

>"Great job, Adam! You went and got Stella destroyed!" he yelled at him, "What was the one thing I asked? HUH! That you took care of her. And now look what you've gone and done, you bastard! Why didn't you help her!" Adam had no head, but if he did, tears would be flowing down it.

>"Damien, I-"

>"Why Adam?" came a new voice. A young man with blonde hair and gold armor appeared beside Damien. Sam was missing an arm, blood flowing out the wound. His skin was chalk white, his grey eyes dull and lifeless.

>"Why, man? Why couldn't you save me? I would have for you. How could you just leave me to die?" Adam was about ready to burst into sobs.

>"Sam, it's not like that. I-"

>"Why Adam?" said Stella.
>"Why Adam?" said Damien.
>"Why Adam?" said Sam.
>Adam tried to shut his eyes, to block out the voices of his friends, but he had no eyes to shut. He could only stay there listening.
>"Why Adam?"
>"Why?"
>"Why?"
>"I'M SORRY!" he screamed.

His eyes snapped open, at he sat bolt upright. In an instant, he took in his surroundings: the bed he was on, the bandages wrapped around his head, the medical ward he was in, and the three men in hospital gowns sitting around him.

>"Hey, your up finally." said Chazz, relieved. Adam took in the blue eyed Spartans changes. He sat in a chair, leaning back in it. The hospital gown he wore had no sleeves, revealing the large incision scars on his shoulders. Adam instantly recognized them to be scars from bio-mechanics implantation.
"Thank Christ." came Kyle's voice, a little raspier than normal. He was sitting in another chair, leaned forward, on the opposite side of Adam's bed. The demo-Spartan's eyes widened when he saw the green eyed Spartan's face: the blotchy skin, the angry scars and the lack of hair or his right eye.

>"What happened to you guys?" asked Adam, "I got hit by-"
"An elite general." said Sam, "According to Chazz, a different one got each of us." The grey eyed Spartan was leaning against a wall, arms folded. Adam looked over at him, and gasped. One of his arms was made of metal, exposed gears and wires softly whirring away.

>'Would that have happened if I had been able to help him?' thought Adam, feeling bad again.

>"Sam, I'm-"
"Sorry, I know." interrupted Sam, "You were apologizing to lots of people in your sleep. It's cool, though. There was nothing you could have done." That didn't make Adam feel any different.

>"It just seems like I failed everyone. You guys, Damien, Ste-" he stopped mid-word. A panicked thought came to him.
"Stella." he said quietly, "Did she-" Kyle and Sam looked at Chazz. The Spartan closed his eyes and sighed, then shook his head.

>"That elite knew what he was doing. He completely destroyed her. Her AI system couldn't be salvaged. She's gone." Adam looked down at his lap, his eyes becoming very reflective. So that was it. His most faithful companion had been killed right in front of him, and there wasn't a damn thing he could have done. The despair he felt brought untold amounts of stress, which triggered his increased aggression augmentation. This then combined with his own natural hatred to create fury like no one, not even Kyle or Sam, had felt.
"Well guys," said Adam, very calmly, but with the air of someone who was prepared to tear apart the universe itself, "I'd say we have business with these elites. Time to show them exactly who they decided to pick a fight with."

10. Chapter 6

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

****Chapter 6: A Stronger Threat****

Eaite' Randjamee stood on the bridge of the Sanghelli Capital ship, Divine Wind, relishing in their victory over the Demons. The battalion had proven to be a useful scapegoat, which is why he allowed no other Sanghelli to be a part of it, so they would not perish.

>'The Jiralhanae were fools to think we would truly allow them to lead such an invasion force.' he thought with a chuckle

>"General." said the Sanghelli officer in charge of communications, "We are being heralded by T_he Unyielding Hierophant_. They request to speak to you and the other three generals alone."

>"The Hierophant?" Eaite' clicked his mandibles in confusion.

>'The fleet of Unrelenting Force's mobile command and control center. Something big must be happening.' He began walking to the exit to find the other generals.

>"Patch it to my chambers. The four of us shall answer their call.'"<p>

Jesse stared out the view deck, as he always did when he was thinking. He had just left the comms, learning that all the Covenant forces on the planet had disappeared. Something didn't add up. The Covenant were acting strangely here. Jesse had been part of many battles with the Covenant during his entire career. He had witnessed the awesome might of Covenant ships as they lay waste to entire planets. He knew their system, where they would send their ground forces in to destroy the major cities and all the planets defenses, then retreat and rain hellfire down on it with their ship's weapons. If they met any resistance, then they attacked continuously until it was crushed, but these ones had retreated just as they turned the tides in their favor. It was almost as if they were waiting for something. Jesse kept the ship on high alert.

>'Whatever it is, it can't be good.' he thought to himself as he looked away from the planet and into space, _'But the longer they wait, the better for us.'_ He walked over to the security station on the bridge, looking over the shoulder of the man sitting at the terminal. He gazed at video footage of the Spartans training to regain their strength.

The four generals all stood in Eaite's quarters, all facing the communications transponder. The hologram of an old, gold-armored Sanghelli sparked to life. The four put their right arms to their chests and dropped to one knee, heads bowed.

>"Noble Fleetmaster, to what occasion do you owe us such an honor?" said Eaite' in a formal tone. The old elite clicked his mandibles.
"The Prophet of Regret himself is gathering a large invasion force, and is rearing his head at a newly discovered human planet, which they seem to call 'Eeeaarrrth'." he proclaimed, struggling a bit to pronounce the human word, "They must pay for their unending heresy." Quen' Quitonmee looked up, puzzled.

>"Fleetmaster, what have the humans done this time?" he asked. The Fleetmaster gave a murderous growl.
"My brothers, after ages of devotion, we have found one of the sacred rings." All four generals heads jerked up to face the hologram, shock etched into their faces.

>"But this is glorious news." stated Hona' with a wicked grin, "We can use the ring's limitless power to wipe out the Heretics once and for all." The gold one shook his head.
"The fleet of Particular

Justice was sent after a human ship and stumbled upon it." he paused. The four stayed politely silent, but thought about what he was saying. The humans had also found the ring, but the fleet of Particular Justice was under the command of the great Thel Vadamee. There should have been no problem. The old Sangheli bowed his head.

>"The fleet was wiped out. The ring was destroyed." he said quietly.<p>

The four generals froze. What had they just heard?

>"How could this have happened?" asked Glew', "How could the humans destroy one of the Sacred Rings?"
"One of their Demons was aboard that ship." replied the Fleetmaster, "One of the larger, stronger ones. He caused the destruction of the ring." Quen's mandibles gnashed together furiously.

>"How could a single Demon destroy the Ring when Particular Justice was there to stop them."
"While the fleet did suffer casualties in the confrontation with the the human ship, they eventually brought it down. It crashed on the holy relic, and the fleet followed. While on the ground, the Demon slaughtered all in his path, defeating them on almost all confrontations. To make matters worse, the Field Marshal in charge awakened the Great Parasite." The four generals hissed at the mention of the Flood. The Fleetmaster continued.

>"With the appearance of the Flood came the awakening of the guardians of the Sacred Ring. The Demon somehow befriended their leader and gained their trust, then it turned on them, destroying their crashed ship, causing the Ring to break apart. We have lost a great holy item, and the humans will pay for it with their blood." he shouted that last statement, which led the other four to roar in approval. Then something occurred to Eaite'.
"You stated that it was a Field Marshal who was giving orders. Why was Fleetmaster Vadamee not the one in command?" The great Thel' Vadamee was not the type of Shipmaster to call orders from the bridge of his ship, he would have led from the front lines. He also would likely have not have been as foolish as to awaken the Flood. The Fleetmaster clicked his mandibles.

>"The Ascendant Justice was not among the fleet, it had held back to report on the last human planet that was destroyed. It was not present when the Ring was destroyed. It arrived to nothing but wreckage. They just now reported of this catastrophe." Hona' finally decided to speak up.

>"And what of the Demon? Has there been any evidence that it survived the destruction of the Ring?"
"No." replied the hologram, "Nothing of value has come up as of this moment, but as far as I am concerned, Demons are never dead until you see their corpse before you."

He paused.

>"But returning to the matter at hand. The Prophet of Regret himself is leading an assault on another human world. His fleet is preparing to depart for it, and the fleet of Unrelenting Force is to follow when we are ready. The holy one has also requested that we gather additional forces. Which leads me to you four." He stretched his neck to his full height, so he was towering over the kneeling generals.
"We are taking ownership of your forces. We require additional smaller ships for supporting our cruisers. Your ships will join Unrelenting Force, and will depart immediately." The four generals stared at the hologram in disbelief.

>"With all due respect Fleetmaster, the world we are currently assaulting has not yet fallen." said Eaite' with an annoyed growl.
"How are we to destroy this world without ships?" said

Hona, also expressing his concern. The old Sanghelli gave a small chuckle.

>"Worry not, my brothers, for we will not simply take without giving. We are sending you three new capital ships. They do not even have names yet, so that will be left to you. Congratulations, you four are hereby promoted to the rank of Shipmaster."<p>

Silence fell over the room. The four Generals, Shipmasters now, Stared up at the hologram of the Fleetmaster.

>"What?" asked the hologram, chuckling, "Is four Capital ships not enough?"
"I-...We-...No Fleetmaster." stammered Hona'.

>"It is a great honor for this opportunity." said Quen' with a hiss of an inhale.
"With these ships, we can destroy this world once and for all." stated Glew with a look of wicked satisfaction on his face. The Fleetmaster nodded.

>"Then it is settled. Your ships shall depart immediately and join the fleet of Unrelenting Force. Divine Wind shall retreat for now and await the three incoming ships. They are scheduled to arrive in 32 cycles. When they do, see to it that that world burns quickly."

>"Yes Sire!" the four shouted
"Return to High Charity when your mission is complete." ordered the hologram once more, then it fizzled and died out. Eaite' turned to look at the other Sanghelli, a grin on his face.

>"Fortune has shone upon us my brothers. This also proves to work precisely in our favor. When the ships arrive, the cloak and dagger game is done. We will attack this world head on, and eradicate everything in our path." He stared of into nothing, deep in thought.
'32 cycles. you had best be ready for us, Demons.'

11. Chapter 7

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

Sorry I've been incognito so long. I place all the blame on Skyrim and Mass Effect, so take it up with them.

Chapter 7: The Calm

A month. 32 days had passed since the fight in the canyon, and the Covenant hadn't reappeared once. In fact, tons of ships had made slipspace jumps away from the system. This had generated mixed feelings throughout the crew of '_The Midnight Shadow_'. For the loudmouthed ODSTs, they thought they had retreated, and gloated proudly that they had scared them off. Jesse and the military strategists thought it was an unnatural occurrence, especially since there had recently been a brief moment of unnatural slipspace activity, and figured they were up to something, so they kept the ship on yellow alert. For the Spartans, they knew that they would be back, and they were preparing for the inevitable.

Around 0600 hours, Kyle entered Sam's room, not even bothering to knock. The two knew each other so well that such gestures had been deemed unnecessary. Sam was standing in the middle of the small room, his arms, both organic and mechanical, were crossed over his chest. He was staring hard at the intricate design of covenant energy sword hilts that hung on his wall, specifically at the one spot that lay vacant. Kyle looked around Sam's room, taking in every detail. His

two knives were embedded hilt deep in his steel desk, with several other holes and gashes covering its surface. His locker had been shifted to a different spot on the wall, imperfectly, leaving a large gap between the back of the locker and the wall. Through the gap, Kyle could see several large dents in the wall, about the size of a fist, as well as an equal sized hole that punched through the wall into his own room next door.

>'It still scares me a bit.' thought Kyle, staring at the hole, _'This ship is made of solid Titanium-A_.' Resting atop the locker was Sam's new helmet. It was an EVA helmet, made for having the widest possible vision. Again it had an acrylic red visor, but Sam had taken one of his knives and scratched a demonic face into it, grinning evilly down at him, the red eyes staring with all the fires of Hell.

>"Hey." he finally said, turning to Sam.
"Hey." he replied back, not turning away from the design on the wall, "How's the eye?" he asked. On the good side of Kyle's face, his dark hair had grown back, stopping down at the top and growing jagged. He had recolored his hair to now have streaks of red down the side, giving the impression of a huge pronged gash down his head, the other half of his head had a much thinner fringe of hair, his skin standing out blotchy red beneath the black. His eye looked, for the most part, not bad. The skin and flesh had been mended very well, his eyelid remaining permanently closed.

>"Still stings a bit. Getting used to the lack of vision on the right side. How's the arm?" Sam unfolded his arm from his chest and brought it in front of his face. The mechanical hand clenched into a fist then uncurled again, then the fingers wiggled in a wave pattern. He had colored his metal fist a vibrant blue, a shade darker than typical covenant plasma. The length of his arm had been colored with intricate blue patterns like trailing fire, which made it look like he was punching with a blue fireball.
"Getting used to it. It can pack more of a punch, literally, as we both know" he gestured to the hole in the wall. "Plus I think Jenny thinks it's cool." he joked, giving Kyle a small smile. He smiled back, then jerked his head towards the door.

>"Know how Adam and Chazz are doing? I haven't seen them all to much recently." he said, blinking his good eye. It was half a joke and half a legitimate reason, since he had been in therapy for the pain in his face.
Sam chilled a bit at the joke then answered.

>"Chazz seems well enough. He was the one who had all the details to begin with, so I'd say he is faring the best. His new shoulders allow him to take more weight in his arms. Adam is able to move at 100% again now, and it seems as though he is no longer consumed by his hatred and sorrow and making crucial mistakes. Now his anger gives him focus. I think they are ready for the next move. What about you, you ready to shoot real stuff again?"
Kyle grimaced. His lack of an eye had completely thrown off his ability to shoot with accuracy. It had been maddening to re-learn how to shoot.

>"Yeah I'm good now, although I'll never be as good as I was with two eyes. That is why I've changed my helmet to the GUNGNIR variant. I can only see out of one eye so it only has one eye socket, and the rest of the helmet is filled with tech that compensates for things, like depth perception, and the HURS uplink on the side helps me target things." He then gestured toward the design on the wall.

>"I thought you were finished with this thing." he stated, a little puzzled.
"Nope. One more spot, and it's reserved for a very specific sword." Suddenly, a blaring alarm sounded throughout the ship.

>"Alert! Alert! All personnel to stations immediately. Zeta Squad report to the bridge!" Zetas 2 and 3 looked at each other, then both took off down the hall.<p>

"Report!" Yelled Jesse as crewmen raced about the bridge to their consoles.

>"Patrol group Lima has been engaged. Four Covenant Capital ships just came out of cloak on the edge of the system and attacked them." Jesse gripped the rail of the CO deck until his knuckles went white.
'_So they're finally back_' Thought Jesse. There was only the four capital ships. Their fleet must have been re-deployed elsewhere, and these ships must have come to Finnish the job.

>'That would explain the slipspace disturbance.' He then straightened up.

>"Being our defenses online. Launch Longswords and Sabers. Man the rail guns and defensive turrets, remove safeties on all Archer missiles and spool up the MAC guns. Tell all remaining forces to converge above Harmony. Tell Lima group to form up with them."
"Aye-Aye Admiral." Answered the comms and weapons officers. Then the comms officer froze.

>"Lima group is no longer responding. They've all been destroyed." Jesse briefly shut his eyes. That significantly lowered they're chances of winning a space confrontation. Setting the Shadow aside, that left the UNSC with six corvettes, four frigates, and one other destroyer. This would not end well.
'_I supposes they had better be ready_' thought Jesse.

>"Get Zeta Squad up here now!"<p>

"That's the layout of the situation, Zeta. Any thoughts on what to do?" Asked the Admiral. He stood on the other side of the holo table from the Spartans. He took note on how much the four of them had changed. Aside from the obvious physical changes, all four of them stared at the Holographic projection of the enemy ships with such fierce determination.

>"Four Ships." muttered Chazz aloud. Kyle glanced at him.
"You think that-"

>"Yeah, it's them." finished Sam. Jesse looked at them, puzzled.
"What do you mean?" He asked. The gold Spartan looked up at him.

>"A month ago we were each pegged by a different Elite General. By this time they have probably been rewarded for crippling this worlds 'Demons'," he made air quotes with his fingers on that word, "and have now each been promoted to Shipmaster." Jesse quietly waited for Sam to finish speaking before he started.
"That still doesn't help us with taking out the ships."

>"How many nukes do we have?" Asked Adam.
"Both_ The Midnight Shado_w and_ The Vimmy_ have two FENRIS nuclear warheads each." he indicated the holograms of the human destroyers, "But they won't do much good, because the Covenant ships' shields will absorb it and they're armor can withstand it."

>"So the answer should be obvious, shouldn't it?" Answered Adam . Jesse remained Solent for a moment, then his eyes widened.
"Your suggesting-"

>"Yes. Each one of us will board a ship with a warhead, then set them off inside. It will destroy the ship from the inside out." Jesse shook his head.
"No. That is far to risky, we can't allow-"

>"Look, Sir," interrupted Chazz "There isn't any other choice. Those ships will be on us in no time and they'll waste all of our ships if

we don't do something. We can't wait for reinforcements, and Harmony has no surface artillery. Like it or not, this is the only way." Jesse blinked at the Spartans, then he turned to the viewport and sighed.
"...What are you going to need?" Kyle straightened up to answer.

>"First, we need the two nukes from the Vimmy brought here. Then we'll need transport to each ship, preferably a Saber, for speed and maneuverability. We'll need a small escort to keep the Seraphs off of us, and lastly we need to coordinate to drop the ships shields so we can board." The Admiral continued to stare out the viewport, deep in thought.
'_They're right. It is really the only way to do this, but the odds that they'll be up against..._'

>"You four are aware of the risk that is involved in this mission? You won't have any backup, not even each other. The odds of you completing this mission, let alone surviving, are slim to none. Do you accept these risks?" The four Spartans snapped to attention.
"Yes Sir!" They shouted simultaneously, arms raised in salute. Jesse also straightened to attention and saluted them back.

>"Then saddle up and give 'em Hell."<p>

Soon after, Zeta Squad stood waiting in the hangar. The four of them had each been given a large pack they could sling over their shoulders tightly. Kyle's and Chazz's packs each contained a FENRIS nuclear warhead. Sam's and Adam's were currently empty. They stood waiting as Jenny flew into the hangar and landed. The back hatch opened up and she stepped out the back. Behind her were the other two warheads strapped to the deck. Adam began walking towards the pelican, opening his mouth to speak, but was silenced by Jenny.

>"No. Stop. Shut up." she ordered. Adam stopped walking, and the four Spartans silenced themselves and listened.
"I realize that you four are absolute nut-jobs, but do you understand what your doing? You'll each be inside a Covenant ship, teeming with troops, all alone. Do you understand that you may not come back?!" She said, almost in a pleading tone. At that point, the four Spartans all began chuckling.

>"Wow Jenny," said Adam. "I didnt know you cared that much." The pilot looked at the blsck armored Spartan.
"We'll yeah. You guys are my friends. If you guys didn't make it, I-" In that time, Chazz walked right up to her and placed a finger over her mouth, silencing her.

>"Jenny, we may have been out for a while, but that didn't change who we are."
"We're Zeta Squad." exclaimed Kyle as slid his helmet on. "We always get the job done." Sam tapped his two mechanical fingers to his temple.

>"And always have time to gloat about it after."<p>

Happy Thanksgiving to all my fellow Canadians, as well as anyone else who has Thanksgiving this weekend.

12. Chapter 8

The Untold Story of Zeta Squad

Guess what? I ended up rewriting this so many times that it is now going to be in two parts. Yay. Here is part one. Part two shouldn't be far behind. Enjoy.

Chapter 8: The Storm Part 1

Eaite' stood in the center of the C.I.C of _Divine Wind_, looking at the holograms of the four Covenant ships in the center of the room. His ship was at the head of the formation, with the three new ones filing in behind it. Coming up on his rear was _Lies and Deceit_, Hona's ship, which fit his spidery character nicely. Behind him was Glew's ship, the _Power and Glory_. Eaite scoffed a bit at the name. Glew' was pretentious, but that was a bit much. Bringing up the rear was the _Unflinching Loyalty_. The name Quen' gave his ship puzzled Eaite' slightly; he was not totally sure where Quen's loyalty exactly lied. The four ships glided through space, passing planets and moons on the way towards the golden planet infested with humans.

>'Soon.' thought Eaite' with a smile, _'The final confrontation is at hand.'_ He turned to the Sanghelli standing beside him.
>"Send the Unggoy to set up the hangar for the demons arrival. Also, send someone to the sub-levels. Tell them to wake Onua and Whenua, and make sure they are ready."<p>

"Three minutes to contact!" shouted the officer manning the radar station. Jesse sat in the command chair, his arms on the rests.

>"Fleet status!" He ordered in a loud, forceful tone.
"All stations report ready for duty, Sir." Replied the comms officer. The holo table displayed the human fleet in front of Harmony. The corvettes were at the front of the convoy, their weapons having the shortest range. The frigates were behind them, and The _Vimmy_ dwarfed all of them in the back. The Midnight Shadow wasn't showing up.

>"And how is the Shadow doing?" Asked Jesse.
>"We've moved off from the rest of the fleet and engaged our stealth systems. They won't be able to find us, Sir." came the reply from navigations.
"Thirty seconds to contact!" Yelled the radar officer. Jesse keyed something into his comm, and spoke into it.

>"Zeta Squad, this is Midnight Actual. What's your status?" There was a bit of interference before Adam's voice replied.
"We've got our nukes and taken off in the Sabers. We can see the bad guys coming."

>"Five seconds to contact!"
"They're firing their particle canons and launching Seraphs! Disperse!" Came Chazz's yell.
>"Sir, one of the corvettes got hit." Exclaimed the radar officer." Jesse stood up from his chair.
"Brace yourselves, Men. It's go time."

Glew' sat in his Shipmaster's chair, a look of smugness on his face, his new gold armor shining In the light. He straitened his back in order to fill up the chair as much as possible.

>'I was born to sit in this chair.' he thought. The ship lurched as it was hit by something.
>"Shields are holding!" squeaked an Unggoy at a console.
Suddenly, a device at Glew's belt beeped. He pulled it off his belt and activated it, opening communications between himself and the other three Shipmasters.

>"We are within acceptable range of their fleet and planet," came Eaite's voice, "It is time to invite our adversaries in."
"But how are we going to lead the correct Demon to the correct ship?" Asked Hona'. Glew' smiled.

>"Allow me to handle that. I learned a special form of human communication for an occasion such as this." He took a moment to explain his method, then they all agreed to it.
"Very well." came Eaite's voice, "Make sure you make the Demons work in order to reach you."
>"What do you propose we do?" asked Hona'.
"Be creative." came Eaite's reply.
>"What about the human fleet?" asked Hona', "I stand by my opt to bring in Faith..."
"No." came the deep voice of Quen', "We only do that when the Demons are destroyed, unless it is necessary. the order rests with me." And then his comm shut off. Seeing as the conversation was over, Glew' switched his device off and put it away and turned his head to a monitor showing the ship's hangar.
>"What shall we do to prepare, Shipmaster?" asked a Sanghelli standing beside his chair. Glew' turned his head to look at the Unggoy that had spoken earlier.
"Get the Unggoy 'equipped'." He said with a malicious smile.

"Sir, I'm getting something." said the comms officer. Jesse turned his head in his direction.
>"What is it?" He asked.
"The enemy ships seem to be emitting a beeping noise on our comms."
>"What!? How do they know our comms frequency?" The officer was silent for a moment, turning a dial on his console.
"It's on all frequencies, Sir. Like they're making sure we hear it." Jesse raised an eyebrow at this.
>"Let's hear it." He said. The comms officer transferred the signal to the bridge speakers. The beeping seemed to come in short and long bursts, like a pattern, then paused and repeated. Suddenly the navigations officer jerked his head up.
"I know what this is." he proclaimed, "This is morse code. How the hell do the Covenant know how to use morse code?"
>"That is irrelevant." exclaimed Jesse, "Can you translate it is the real question." The man nodded and pulled out a datapad and a pair of headphones. Then he sat down and played the signal through the headphones and listened. After a couple of minutes he got up again and walked up to Jesse and handed him the datapad. Jesse looked at what was deciphered. The ships only seemed to be transmitting one word each, and it made no sense to him.
'But I have an idea about who might know.' he thought grimly. He turned back to the comms officer.
>"Get Zeta on the horn." He said. The officer nodded and brought his microphone closer to his face.
"Zeta Squad, this is _The Midnight Shadow_, please acknowledge and go for secure. "
>"Zeta-1, secure" came Chazz's voice.
"Zeta-2, secure." replied Kyle.
>"Zeta-4, secure." responded Adam.<p>

Jesse saw the comms officer's eyes widen.
>"Zeta-3, please respond." He tried again.
"Hold on a sec." Came a reply, the audio a bit crackled. A loud bang sounded.
>"No! No! Stop that!" came a panicked shout, followed by a whoosh noise that sounded like a fire extinguisher, then an exasperated sigh.
"God I hate flying. Yeah, Zeta-3, secure." The comms officer raised an eyebrow at the speaker, then shook himself. Jesse approached the station and took the microphone.
>"Zeta Squad, this is the Admiral. We found something that you might what to hear."
"Alright, what is it?" Asked Chazz. Jesse looked back at the datapad in his hand.
>"Those ships are each broadcasting a single world for all to hear.

They are: Blinded , Humiliation, Shame, Powerless. Do they mean anything to you four." There was a silence in the room as the Spartans took in the information. Jesse already knew that they knew what it meant.
"You said each ship is broadcasting a separate word?" Asked Adam.

>"That is correct." replied Jesse.
"Then that confirms it." Said Sam.

>"These messages are essentially invitations." Said Kyle. Jesse looked puzzled.
"Invitations? To what?"

>"To a party of course." said Chazz, "Give each of us the ship with the correct word coming from it. Mine is Humiliation."
"My ship is Blinded." Said Kyle.

>"I'll take Shame." Said Sam.
"Which leaves me with Powerless." finished Adam.

>"What?" exclaimed Jesse, "You can't be serious. You'll be walking straight into a trap.
"Well, we already know that the four of us each have to enter a separate ship," came Kyle's voice, "so we might as well go to the ones we're being invited to." Jesse gripped the sides of the console till his knuckles were white.

>"Put a hold on that, Lieutenants. We're going to try one more tactic. If that doesn't work, you four have full go ahead." There was a tense silence. Jesse could hear Kyle muttering to himself.
"Alright, fine." came the reply, from Chazz.

>"Just keep alive for now." Said Jesse before disconnecting the channel. He then walked over to the holo table and keyed some commands. The hologram zoomed in to the capital ship in the back of the line.
"Get us in behind them. We're going to target the farthest one and land some sneak hits."

Hona' chuckled as he watched another smaller ship explode on the hologram before him. The human fleet was down to a third its original strength, the smaller ships no match for the might of the Covenant weaponry. As it was, the large ship in the back continued to keep a short perimeter of cover with the Hellfire that it rained down at them. He frowned as another blast rocked the ship, and he swayed ever so slightly where he stood. When he had received _Lies and Deceit_, he had had the Shipmasters chair removed. Hona' never sat. To sit meant your guard was down, and Hona' learned from his ages in the Sanghelli Elite Spec Ops that to let your guard down meant you wanted the enemy to kill you. The only time to let your guard down was when your enemy was dead. The ship lurched again.

>'This is becoming annoying.'
 he thought as he watched Unggoy pick themselves up off the floor, _'Blast it Quen', you surly must now be considering...'_

>"Shipmaster!" came a growl from behind him. Hona' turned to see a young Sanghelli recruit, his blue armor fresh and completely unscathed. He gave Hona' decent enough space. Just about the space his sword would reach if he leapt forward and lunged. The Whelp was scared of him it seemed.
"What is it?" demanded the Shipmaster. He had no time for children.

>'I'll bet this whelp has never even killed anything yet. At his age I had been squad leader of my Spec Ops team.'
"The Jiralhanne Chieftain has arrived as you requested, Sire." The Whelp turned to reveal the three apes that towered behind him, as if Hona' hadn't already noticed them. The largest Jiralhanne snorted and shoved the smaller Sanghelli aside.

>"What do you want, Lizard?" It demanded, gazing down at the Shipmaster. The Jiralhanne was at least a full head taller than Hona', who was it turn a head taller than the tallest human. The Brute wore the black and red armor of a Chieftain, with its bulky

shoulders and branched headpiece, though it was nowhere near as intricate or brilliant as Sanghelli shipmaster armor. A coat of iron colored fur covered His huge, muscled limbs, and its paws were tipped with massive nails, perfect for tearing flesh off the bone. He was far larger than the Jiralhanne captain and officer at either side of him. His gravity hammer was slung across his back, and he had a spike rifle at his hip, the curved bayonets on the end glinting in the dim light. And Hona' stared up at him like he was the most boring thing in the world. He couldn't even be bothered to remember the apes name.
"It took you long enough to get up here." he said, almost in a chastising way, "I was beginning to think you had eaten the Whelp and forgotten your way up here." The three apes gave loud growls. Even the Sanghelli cadet stared at the Shipmaster in disbelief. Hona' continued anyway.

>"We are having a guest arrive. A Demon will be landing in the hangar soon, so you and your little pack are going to greet him."
"What?!" Roared the Chieftain, "You're letting a Demon enter the ship?! This is..."

>"What I said is happening!" Hona' roared back, "Now get that through that impossibly thick skull of yours and get your men down there." The Chieftain snapped his massive jaws at the Shipmaster, a sign of defiance. Hona' could see his massive paws twitching, itching to reach for his hammer. The Sanghelli smiled.
"Oh, what's wrong?" he sneered, "Do you fear the Demon? Is your pack so weak that the thought of a lone human has you shaking in your fur? The Whelp would be a better Chieftain than you." That did it. The massive ape roared and ripped the hammer off his back and ran at the Shipmaster. The cadet grabbed at the plasma rifle at his hip at jumped between the Cheiftan and the Shipmaster. The brute did not even break his stride, and brought his hammer down right on the cadet's head. The Whelp didn't even have to register what happened before the hammer crushed through armor, flesh and bone alike. The Chieftain roared again as he brought his hammer up again and lunged at Hona'. The great hammer swung down... And struck the air. The Jiralhanne's eyes widened in shock at the Sanghelli that now stood off to his side, and the red glow embedded in his chest. Hona' laughed as the Chieftain dropped his hammer, then he pushed the huge ape's body off his sword with his foot. The Chieftain fell to the floor with a massive thud, his mouth making gaping motions as he gasped for air, but both his lungs had been pierced and seared. The entire room was silent as the Jiralhanne slowly spluttered and died. Hona' picked up the fallen hammer and exameded it.

>"Crude." he commented. He tossed it at the two other Jiralhanne, where it clattered to the flooring front of the one with the green captain's armor.
"Are you going to try that as well?" He asked as the ape looked from the hammer to the body of his Chieftain then back again, "Or are you going to get your mangy hides to the hangar?" The green armored Jiralhanne slowly picked up the hammer, then slung it across his back.

>"I will assemble the pack." it growled through gritted jaws.
"So it seems like some of you have some intelligence. Go. And take this vile carcass with you." said Hona', giving the dead Jiralhanne body a prod with his foot. The two apes grasped either side of the dead Chieftain and, with much grunting and strain, dragged the body out of the room. Hona' walked up to the crushed and broken body of the Sanghelli cadet.

>"Someone take this one away as well. And give him proper rites. He earned his honor and his place on the Path."<p>

Quen closed his communicator and replaced it on his belt. He then

turned around to face the Kig Yarr shipmistress Yeng'R Mett. The avian alien was leaning onto one foot slightly, and had a plasma pistol loosely fastened to her hip. The self proclaimed 'Pirate Queen' had been a thorn in Quen's side since he got the Unflinching Loyalty. He actually preferred the human word for them: Jackal. It suited them well.

>"So what is it you want from me?" asked Yeng'R Mett in a bored tone, her screeching voice causing Quen to narrow his eyes and bare his teeth briefly. Then he straitened himself.
"The main hangar will be left unshielded in a moment, and there will be humans that attempt to enter the ship. I want you to take your men down to the hangar and deal with them when they arrive." Yeng'R gave a low cackle.

>"And why would you demand that of me?" she asked, "Can your own men not do this? We are only here to help with the ground invasion." It was not a lie, but Quen' knew better than to think it the truth either. The Kig Yarr were pirates. Scavengers. The only reason they were willing to help was for the thought of the salvage they could loot afterwards.
"The humans are fluent in the tactics used by our typical forces." said Quen', "But I'm willing to wager that they have not fought true Kig-Yarr pirates before." Yeng'R gave a slight nod in acknowledgement, but Quen' could see that she was still unconvinced.

>"One more thing. The main force that will board us will be a Demon." The pirate stood straight at that. Quen' repressed a small smile.
"If you kill the Demon, then its armor is yours." That seemed to do it. A devilish grin appeared on the shipmistress's long face.

>"We'll isn't that interesting. Very well, we'll do it. My only request is that you keep your people out of the way of mine." Then she turned around and walked out of the C.I.C. and Quen' smiled to himself.
'Kig Yarr are so predictable.' he thought to himself. He was fairly certain that the Demon would be able to get rid of the jackals, and good riddance if he did. He despised pirates and all things without morals. Suddenly, the ship rocked violently, causing Quen' to stagger a bit, and other operators went sprawling on the floor.

>"That shot pierced our shields!" called an officer, "There are plasma fires in the sub decks!"
"Seal them off and vent them!" ordered Quen'. Another violent lurch shook the room. This time the lights in the room dimmed at bit, then returned to normal

>"Minor hull breaches in the sub-levels. We can't find the origin of those shots!" called the Sanghelli again. Quen' growled.
'We can't continue to take fire like this.' He thought as he stood up to his full hight, 'The time has come.'

>"Signal in the Faith and Devotion.

"Another direct hit, Sir! We dropped their shields!" Announced the weapons officer.

>"Have they figured out where we are yet?" Asked Jesse from the command chair.
"Negative." replied the radar officer, "Though the other ships will likely figure us out if we sink this one." Jesse swiveled his chair to the comms officer.

>"Tell the two closest frigates to engage the ship. I want a full salvo from them." The comms officer nodded and turned back to his console.
"This is the _Midnight Shadow_ hailing the _Jericho_ and the _Cutting Edge_. Acknowledge and go for secure."

>"Secure." came one reply.
"Secure." came the other.

>"Admiral Jesse has ordered the two of you to attack the ship farthest from Harmony. It's shields are down, and the Admiral says full salvo."
"Copy that. We're engaging now. We'll be... in

abou...econds..."

>"Say again, Jericho. That last part didn't come in right."

>"Sir!?" shouted the radar officer, "Radiation spike. Something is coming in through Slipspace." Jesse whirled around.
"What? Identify what it is."

>"On it, Sir. It's big, whatever it..." The officer froze, then turned very pale.
"What is it?!" demanded Jesse. All of a sudden the hologram on the table turned into a large brick of something.

>"What is this. Zoom out." he ordered. The hologram began to pull out, and the shape began growing bigger, soon the object started showing its curved edges and purple plating. The hologram finally stopped, and Jesse's breath caught in his throat. This new thing that had arrived was bigger than all four of the Covenant Capital ships they were already fighting. It shrouded Harmony from the sun in its shadow .
It was a Covenant Super-Carrier.

End
file.